

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Name of Candidate IAN BRUCE DOYLE
Degree Ph. D. (DIVINITY) Date 1st May, 1956.
Title of Thesis John Brown of Wamphray - A Study of his life,
Work and Thought.

The thesis is divided into three parts.

The first is entitled "His Life and Work." After a first chapter concerned with the historical background, there is set down all that can be learned of his life in Scotland. The sources are tremendously meagre, a few references in the letters of Samuel Rutherford, a few notes in the records of Edinburgh University. The story of his arrest for non-recognition of the Restoration Church, his trial, his sentence of exile are told as the contemporary records reveal them. In the third Chapter his life and work in Holland are discussed. Since his life-work consisted largely of writing, a summary of his books is given in this chapter.

Part II of the thesis is entitled "His Thought." The main subjects which Brown dealt with in his voluminous writings in English and Latin are set forth.

Chapter I concerns Scripture. For Brown, the Word of God verbally inspired, wholly infallible, is the complete and sole authority for all doctrine and life. Chapter 2 discusses the Sovereignty of God. God is declared to be Absolute Master of all. With regard to the moral law, to the eternal decrees, to the sufferings of His people, to their prayers, His will is supreme. Chapter 3 concerns the Way of Salvation. Brown is always an evangelist and a steadfast protagonist of justification by faith alone. Chapters 4 and 5 concern the Church, Chapter 4 its nature, Chapter 5 its headship. In these sections the most controversial issues of his time are dealt with clearly and passionately. Chapter 6 entitled "Concerning Christian Living" reveals another side of Brown's character and work. In Rotterdam he assisted in the work of the Scottish Church, in preaching and in pastoral work and his concern that Christians should grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord is reflected in the various thoughts which are brought together in this chapter. The closing chapter of this Part, concerns Brown's doctrine of the Sabbath. A Book in two massive volumes, written in Latin, is summarised in this chapter and gives perhaps the most complete doctrine of the Sabbath that has emerged in our Scottish theological writings.

Part III is a brief section entitled "The Man and the Writer." Since we know so little about Brown outside his own books it is on these that this study is based. In Chapter 1 "Controversial and Devotional Writer" the two strangely conjoined sides of his character and work are discussed. In Chapter 2 "Some Illustrative Extracts" "from the Devotional Writings" are given.



JOHN BROWN OF WAMPHRAY.

A study of his life, work and thought.

By

Ian Bruce Doyle.

(A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Divinity,
University of Edinburgh, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy.)

1st. May, 1956.



TO

I.F.D. and A.W.D.

Preface.

John Buchan has called the seventeenth century "the most fascinating epoch in our history, since it reveals in the strongest relief the eternal problem of human life - the adjustment of man's duty to God and his duty to the world around him." I have felt that fascination grow upon me as I have studied the life and work of Rev. John Brown of Wamphray, for that study takes one right to the heart of the religious, ecclesiastical and political problems of the later seventeenth century.

I am very grateful to the Very Rev. Principal Emeritus Hugh Watt, D.D., who turned my mind towards this study, and throughout the period of research has given me never failing courtesy and helpfulness. Rev. James S. McEwan, B.D. too has placed me very much in his debt for his kindness and encouragement.

Over the period of study many libraries have been drawn upon for help and I have found that librarians generally count no trouble too great to come to the aid of a student. In particular however, I have owed most to the Librarians of New College Edinburgh, Dr. J.A. Lamb, and Miss E.R. Leslie. I am deeply appreciative of their friendly counsel and practical help.

I wish to express thanks to my friend Miss Ellen Robison who has given invaluable help in preparing the manuscript.

I.B.D.

Contents.

PART I.

His Life and Work.

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------------|--------|
| Chapter 1. | The Background. | p. 1. |
| Chapter 2. | The Hidden Years. | p. 24. |
| Chapter 3. | Life and Work in Holland. | p. 46. |

PART II.

His Thought.

- | | | |
|------------|--|---------|
| Chapter 1. | Concerning Scripture. | p. 78. |
| Chapter 2. | Concerning the Sovereignty of God. | p. 99. |
| Chapter 3. | Concerning the Way of Salvation. | p. 125. |
| Chapter 4. | Concerning the Church. | p. 145. |
| Chapter 5. | Concerning the Headship of the Church. | p. 157. |
| Chapter 6. | Concerning Christian Living. | p. 179. |
| Chapter 7. | Concerning the Sabbath. | p. 196. |

PART III.

The Man and the Writer.

- | | | |
|------------|---|---------|
| Chapter 1. | Controversialist and Devotional Writer. | p. 220. |
| Chapter 2. | Some Illustrative Extracts from
the Devotional Writings. | p. 228. |

PART I
HIS LIFE AND WORK

"They planted the strong roots of our liberties. We reap the harvest of a field which other men have tilled and sown."

A. Taylor Innes.

CHAPTER I - THE BACKGROUND.

I The King's Home-coming.

It is one of the ironies of history that the Restoration of 1660 was greeted by the Scottish nation almost in its entirety with an outburst of rejoicing unparalleled in the history of a race not given to emotional outbursts. As soon as the arrival of the monarch, so suddenly exalted from beggary to kingship, was made known in Scotland, the greater part of the nation became frantic with joy, a hilarity that degenerated before long into plain drunkenness and immorality.¹ The capital city led the nation's rejoicing.² A day of thanksgiving was proclaimed in Edinburgh, 19th June, a day that began with sermons but was ended in less hallowed activities. Banqueting and bonfires made the city gay. At the Cross a table was spread for the magistrates. Barrels of wine were poured forth and three hundred dozen of glasses were smashed by loyal drinkers of the king's health. The Castle-hill had its fireworks and the plain folk of the city shrieked their merriment as Oliver Cromwell was seen pursued by the Devil, and roared with approval when at last

-
1. Burnet's History of His Own Time. Vol.1. p.127.
 2. Wodrow's History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland. Vol. 1. p. 62.

both were blown into the air.¹ Scarce a town in Scotland but imitated the Capital and vied in declarations of loyalty to the restored king.

Scotland of course could boast that long ere England recognised the rights of the young man now seated upon her throne, she had acknowledged him the heir to her long line of kings, and indeed paid a bitter price in blood and tears for his crowning at Scone on a cold January day nine years before. Scotland had ever been royalist. She had risen against Charles I but had never refused his right to be king, and had shuddered with a universal repugnance when the English army cut off his anointed head.

She had been deprived of the second Charles but had never renounced him, and now in this moment of dramatic change the old royalist feeling of the nation rose high. Charles was Scotland's king, representative of a line older than recorded history. It was but right there should be rejoicing. So the nation gave itself to loyal huzzahs, and only when the tables were cleared and the bonfires extinguished, did men begin to ask themselves where now Scotland stood.

The past thirty years had been years of tumult and conflict for the Scottish people. They had found the

1. J. Nicol, Diary (1650-70) Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh 1836.

kingly absolutism of Charles I too sore to be borne. They had lived under the strict domination of the Kirk. They had seen Cromwell drive their king into exile and carry the instruments of government to London. And now another turn of the wheel had brought monarchy to supreme power again. Would the weary land now find settled peace? What did the future hold?

II The Restoration Settlement in Church and State.

The first act of Charles in his government of Scotland showed that fundamentally he meant to follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. Without calling any meeting of Parliament he nominated his Privy Council and appointed his chief officers of state. The method of appointment and even more the characters of the men appointed were no good omens for the future happiness of the Kingdom.

The key man was John Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale, appointed, as secretary to the Council, to the post with supreme advantage of having always the king's ear. In the old days none had been more zealous than he in the cause of the Covenant. But the passage of the years had wrought a sorry change in him. Whatever had been true of him in the halcyon days of the Kirk, whether it was sincerity that had prompted his zeal or a desire to be associated with a

successful cause, now he had made no secret of his resolve to keep the king's favour whatever principles might be endangered or vows forgotten. "A cartful of oaths, he declared he would make before he would lose his place."¹

This blatant time-server, with his red head and fiery face, his thick sensual lips and blubbering tongue,² was to be the king's right-hand man in the governing or mis-governing of Scotland for the next twenty years.

The Earl of Rothes³ was appointed to the Presidency of the Council. He came of a family that also had been of note in the early days of the Covenant. His father indeed had been one of the leaders of the revolt against Charles I. But the son was of another mould. No base appetite seemed outside the sphere of his desire. Notoriously loose-living he gave such gratification to bodily appetites that he was described 'as always either drunk or sick.' A fitting accomplice for the gross Lauderdale.

Chosen to be Royal Commissioner to the first Parliament of the new reign was John Middleton,⁴ newly created Earl of Middleton, a rough soldier whose best virtue was his loyalty to the Crown. 'He knew no other rule,' says Burnett, 'but to obey orders.' And when he took up residence in Holyrood House on Hogmanay night 1660 Dr. James Sharp arrived to be his chaplain; Dr. Sharp commissioned by his brother ministers to

-
1. Mackenzie "Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland" (edit. 1821 - pp. 12-19)
 2. Burnet's "History" Vol. I. p.139.
 3. Baillie "Letters & Journals." Vol. III p.367.
 4. Burnet's "History". Vol. I. p.143. p.157. p.220.

maintain their interests at the Royal Court but now suspected of having turned traitor for an archbishop's mitre.

Such were the men whom the Restoration brought to rule Scotland.

And yet it seemed that at least in the sphere of things ecclesiastic all might be well, for Dr. Sharp had brought with him a letter under the King's own seal which was couched in the fairest terms. "We do resolve," wrote the King, "to protect and preserve the government of the Church of Scotland as it is settled by law, without violation, and to countenance in the due exercise of their functions all such ministers who shall behave themselves dutifully and peaceably, as becomes men of their calling."¹ "Nothing could seem more satisfactory and the Presbytery of Edinburgh in great joy after suspicions that seemed now so ungrounded, appointed a committee to write a letter of thankfulness to the king, enshrined the royal document in a silver box, specially purchased, and sent copies to all the Presbyteries of the Church."² All seemed fair.

But on the first day of January 1661 the parliament met. And it was obvious from the first meeting that the King's wishes as interpreted by his chosen officers of state, were to be absolute law. "Never," wrote a contemporary, "never any parliament was so obsequious to all that was proposed to them."³

-
1. Wodrow's History. Vol 1. 65-81.
 2. Wodrow's History. Vol 1. 80-81. Kirkton "Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland. p.75.
 3. Mackenzie's "Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland. p.12

Under Middleton's presidency it set to work, the loyalty of its members influenced by such drunkenness that it became known as the "Drunken Parliament."¹ In the course of a single session the newly restored king was made absolute monarch of Scotland. It was enacted that with the king lay the sole choice and appointment of all the great officers of state, the right of summoning and dismissing Parliaments, of making war and peace, of concluding leagues and treaties. All public officials and burgh magistrates were to be bound by an oath of allegiance which acknowledged the sovereign as "supreme Governor of this Kingdom over all persons and in all causes."²

Lest however any legislation passed during the years of the troubles might seem to endanger the absolute authority and supreme dignity of the monarch the Drunken Parliament proceeded to its wildest decree. The Lord Clerk Register Sir Archibald Primrose had suggested half in jest that all the legislation of the years 1640-48 might be rescinded. Middleton and his friend "drinking higher"³ resolved on it. A rough draft that Primrose had set down was sufficient for the Committee of Articles and was passed into law. This Rescissory Act, a measure at once foolish, unscrupulous and inconsistent "was only fit" wrote Burnet, "to be concluded after a drunken bout."⁴

-
1. H. Brown's History of Scotland. Vol. III p.385.
 2. Act. Parl. Scotl. VII. 7, Act. 1.
 3. Burnet's History. Vol. 1. p.163.
 4. Burnet's History. Vol. 1. p.164.

The royal power made so absolute was now made clear in respect of the Church. On the same day as the Rescissory Act became law, another bill was passed entitled, "Act concerning religion and Church government."¹ In it the King declared his intention to maintain the national Reformed Presbyterian religion in its purity of doctrine and worship as established in this kingdom during the reign of his royal father and grandfather of blessed memory, to give protection to ministers who stuck to their calling, to settle and secure church government in a frame most in accordance with God's word, monarchy, and national peace. In the meantime administration by sessions, presbyteries and synods would be allowed.

It was in keeping with these acts, making Charles II supreme and absolute Lord of Scotland, that Parliament should vote him a huge annual grant of £40,000 sterling exhausting the resources of a poverty-stricken nation. It was altogether appropriate that the day of his Restoration should be set apart in terms almost blasphemous, as an holy day for ever unto the Lord.²

So to Charles II was granted by act of Parliament absolute control over the goods, the bodies and souls of all his subjects. He had been made king absolute. He had been made Pope as well. State and Church had been set in his

1. Act. Parl. Scot. VII. 87. Act. 127.

2. Act. Parl. Scot. VII. 87. Act. 210.

hands, that he might make of them what his royal will determined. And Charles and his advisers in Scotland had already made it clear that there was to be no mercy for any who stood in the king's way. On May 24th the Marquis of Argyle, who had been leading man in the state during the years of the Church's power was led to the scaffold, and four days later the most zealous of the Covenanting Ministers, James Guthrie met an even more ignominious fate. Two other of the Covenanting leaders were marked down for like punishment but Samuel Rutherford was called to stand before a Higher Court and Johnstone of Warriston whose keen legal mind had directed the cause since the first fateful day in Greyfriars Kirkyard escaped abroad, to be safe only for a few years.

All power was now in the King's hands and no time was wasted in making the Church realise how that power was to be exercised.

On 6th September 1661 a Royal Proclamation was made at the Cross of Edinburgh, the usual heraldic ceremony accompanying it, the magistrates of the city gathered around. The Proclamation announced that Presbytery was abolished because of its unsuitableness to his Majesty's monarchical estate, it restored government by bishops, enjoined compliance, forbade clerical courts, banned all objectors and ordained all magistrates to commit all nonconformists to prison.¹

1. Wodrow's History. Vol. 1. pp. 230 ff.

And what, men might ask of the Royal assurance given little more than a year before; the solemn assurance to protect and preserve the government of the Church as it is settled by law?

The King wrote "whereas our Parliament having since that time not only rescinded all the laws since the troubles began referring to that government, but also declared all those pretended parliaments null and void and left to us the settling and securing of church government; therefore we have after mature deliberation, declared to those of your Council here, our firm resolution to interpose our royal authority for restoring of that Church to its right government by bishops, as it was by law before the late troubles, during the reigns of our royal father and grandfather of blessed memory, and as it now stands settled by law."¹ So by an unblushing piece of sophistry the king wriggled out of his solemn pledge.

The bishops were soon appointed. On the 14th November that same James Sharp who once had carried the confidence of his brother ministers, as their representative to London, brought his betrayal of them to a crowning point, when he accepted letters of patent appointing him to be Archbishop of St. Andrews and Primate of Scotland. Others, among whom Robert Leighton seemed strangely out of place were appointed to complete the hierarchy.

1. Wodrow's History. Vol. 1. p.230.

The second session of Parliament which met on 8th May 1662 completed the reconstruction of the Church. In its first statute it was enacted that "It is fit that parliament be returned to its ancient constitution, that the clergy have their place and vote as formerly."¹ The bishops with appropriate ceremony were ushered to their places. And now the completed estates proceeded to sound the death-knell of Covenanted Presbyterianism. The third act of the Session was an "Act for the Restitution and Re-establishment of the ancient government of the Church by Archbishops and Bishops."² Article seven declared that all parishes were to be considered vacant whose ministers had been appointed since 1649 unless they applied for and got presentation from the former patrons, as well as collation from the bishops before 20th September.³

So now the royal reconstruction of the Church was complete. By kingly decree archbishops and bishops were again settled in their former places, and the reality of the change was now to be brought to the level of the humblest parish. All must recognise the king's right to order the church as he pleased, all must bow before his creatures the bishops.

As the autumn days of this fateful year passed by men all over Scotland were asking, 'Would the matter be so simple as this? Would the king have his way unopposed? Would he stamp out the liberties of Church and state as his father had never

1. Act. Parl. Scot. VII. 370, 371.
2. Act. Parl. Scot. VII. 372-4.
3. Act. Parl. Scot. VII. 376.

succeeded in doing? Or would men stand against him? Were there in all Scotland men sufficient for such an hour as this?

III Possible Centres of Resistance.

To answer the question we must look at those groups within the national life which might have been centres of resistance to the establishment of royal absolutism.

What of the Scottish Parliament? It was as true in 1660 as it was in 1640 of which time John Buchan wrote the words, "that in Scotland there was no strong apparatus of secular government."¹ Parliament was no centre of national feeling and influence as it was in the southern kingdom. The powers of Parliament, with its three estates of clergy, ~~Pe~~tenants-in-chief and burgesses, were for all practical purposes delegated to the Lords of the Articles who had the sole right of initiating business. And the selection of these Lords was controlled by the king. McKenzie indeed tells us that a careful process of selection had been applied before the members of the 1660 Parliament were given their place.² So Parliament was neither representative of national feeling nor free to work out any policy of its own. In the period under consideration it was merely called to give expression to the royal commands.

The Privy Council, the equivalent of our Cabinet was equally in the king's hands. We have seen that its members were chosen personally by the king without consultation even

1. John Buchan "Montrose", p.64.

2. McKenzie, "Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland,"
(edit.1821) pp.12,19.

with Parliament as it was. Its members were creatures of the king: all of them men whose loyalty was unquestioned, whose rise to positions of authority had been the result of their subservience and whose careers depended on the royal whim. In all the mechanism of parliamentary government there was no possibility of anything feebly approaching resistance to the royal will.

What of the Scottish nobles? From medieval times the nobility of Scotland was among the most turbulent in Europe. Seldom indeed did most of them have any feeling of patriotism, self-interest determined courses of action, and the history of the land is full of their feuds with one another, of their rebellions against royal authority, with their own personal advantage determining each issue.

It is true that in the national movement against Charles I which found its expression in the National Covenant, the great nobles of the land combined with church and commons. But while acknowledging religious and patriotic feeling as having some part in the inspiration of their action, it must also be admitted that self-interest again had no small place. The re-division of ecclesiastical plunder was a fundamental article of Charles' church policy and few of the Scottish noble families had not been enriched by the plunder of the old church. So in 1638 self-interest meant opposition to the king. But in Restoration

times self-interest pointed to a policy diametrically different. Indeed not self-interest so much as bare preservation called for sub-servience to the king. The desperate poverty of many of the ruling families was one of the governing factors of this period. In 1654 Baillie wrote of "our wracked Nobility," "Dukes Hamilton, the one executed, the other slain, their estate forfeited," "Huntly - there is more debt on the House than the land can pay," Marischal, Rothes, Eglinton, and his three sons, Crawford, Lauderdale, and others, prisoners in England and their lands sequestered or gifted to English soldiers." From one depressing mention to another Baillie passes through the roll of the Scottish nobility.¹

The Restoration brought to these impoverished lords the opportunity of escape from bankruptcy, Places of consequence, possibilities of enrichment lay in obeying the mandates of the King. We shall understand many of the events of the forthcoming years, the eagerness with which men like the young Argyle were driven into exile and forfeiture, the willingness with which many of the lesser nobility accepted commissions to act among the disaffected Westland folk, pursuing, fining, plundering, if we remember the poverty which had been the lot of the Scottish lords when the Restoration came. We may regret, but we cannot be surprised that many of them

1. Robert Baillie's Letters and Journals Vol. III p.249.

were quick to accept the glittering bribes.

When we look more closely at some of the members of the nobility, even those whose families had stood by the Covenant in earlier days, we are made to realise that religious principles and moral restraints had little likelihood of standing in the way of self-interest.

Rothes we have seen already, completely degenerate son of a leader of the national struggle in the year that followed 1638.

The Earl of Loudon who had promised so well, fell into loose-living ways.¹ The young Earl of Leven died in 1664 after a drunken carouse. The heirs to Eglinton, Murray and Kenmure were wanton lads.² The whole of the nobility with few exceptions seemed infected with loose principles.

Perhaps we shall judge these representatives of the ruling families of Scotland less harshly when we remember the desperately unsettled nature of the twenty years preceding 1660. Years they had been of tumult and disorder, see-saw years with one party and another in power. Many of the nobles had spent years in exile or in prison, they had been tempted to cast away many of the finer things of life in a struggle for existence.

But the fact remains clear however we explain or excuse it, that among the nobility of Scotland there was little hope of resistance to the dictatorial rule of Charles II.

1. Burnet's History. Vol. I. p.59.

2. J.K. Hewison. The Covenanters. Vol. II p.119.

What of the commons of Scotland? Of voice in the country's affairs they had none and their economic conditions were very poor. Says Buchan, "The labourers and shepherds, the petty craftsmen in the villages, even the burghers in the little towns lived very near the edge of destitution. The rudimentary and wasteful system of agriculture placed the farmers at the mercy of an indifferent climate and a poor soil. Stock was in no better case, for the cattle were stunted and perpetually lean and the sheep were moving masses of tar and vermin. At the close of each winter the spectre of starvation came very near to man and beast. Idyllic pictures have been drawn of the Covenanting peasant as a stalwart fellow in good homespun clothes and blue bonnet, of his house as a snug dwelling like an illustration to "The Cottar's Saturday night." The truth seems to be that the physique of most was early ruined by poor feeding and incessant toil, that they had small regard for bodily cleanliness, that their clothes were coarse at the best and generally ragged, and that their dwellings resembled a Connemara Cabin."¹

²Kirkton indeed would have us believe that education did much to counterbalance the economic defects, that "every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible, yes in most of the country all the children of age could read the Scripture."² But Kirkton was laudator temporis acti and his

1. Buchan's Montrose. p.67
2. Kirkton's History p.64.

testimony is not borne out by parish and burgh records.

Obviously people like these common folk of 17th century Scotland, engrossed with the cultivation of a bare existence, were not easily to be made protagonists of any cause, save that which seemed to them absolutely vital, and was guided by inspired leadership.

True in 1638 and the years that followed, these same commoners of Scotland had rallied to the cause of the Covenant and had stood by it loyally even through the costly campaigns against Montrose. But many things had happened in the year between and much that had made the cause of Covenanted Presbytery less attractive to the mass of Scottish peasantry than in the earlier days.

Under the Covenant and indeed under the Commonwealth too the Church had had the ordering of life. And valiant efforts had been made to make the land worthy of a people covenanted to the Lord. Kirkton glories in the moral state of Scotland in the period just before the Restoration: "tells us" that he lived many years in a parish where he never heard an oath, that family worship was practised in almost every house in the land and that the tavern keepers were loudest in complaints against the church because their trade was spoiled."¹ We can readily understand that life under such a strict regime grew wearisome to many. The rarified atmosphere was too demanding for the

1. Kirkton "History". pp.54-55.

mass of folk and by the time of the Restoration many were weary for a change. The joy at the King's return and even more the reception given by the populace of the towns to the Covenanting prisoners after Rullion Green¹ are tokens of the fact, that the commoners of Scotland in 1660 would not be quick to respond to any call in the name of Kirk and Covenant.

What of the Church itself? What of the Covenanted Kirk which in 1638 had been like an army 'terrible with banners' leading the national revolt against a tyrannical king, uniting almost the whole land under its standard?

By 1660 the Church was no longer a unity. The division into factions of Resolutioners and Protesters had torn the Church's unity in shreds, weakened her strength and played havoc with her influence in the nation's life. Resolutioners who had been ready to fight alongside former Royalists and Malignants against Cromwell and now represented a moderate policy in things ecclesiastical were accused by their brother ministers of being Latitudinarians, joining hands with the enemy. Protesters who stood for a firm and narrower outlook were called precisians and fanatics. The General Assembly of 1651 had been torn in twain by this division of outlook. Indeed rival assemblies, Resolutionist and Remonstrant had met, until Cromwell in 1653 with a statesman's desire for peace, sent them

1. Wodrow's History. p.34. Naphthali p.179.

both their ways and forbade any future meetings. The "infatuating and ruining distemper"¹ intruded into every Synod, Presbytery and Kirk Session and even homes and families were split asunder.

In fact, the majority of the Church's ministers were tending to a more moderate and tolerant outlook. The bitter struggles of the past years, the harshness and narrowness of the church's rule in the days of its power, the moderating influences of the Cromwellian rule, had made many weary of extremes and disposed to moderatism. Burton indeed declares² that "the country was never in a more tolerant or moderate temper." Undeniable it is as Baillie's letters and other records of the time make clear, that many of the Resolutionist party, that is of the majority party in the Church were ready to welcome the King home, and far from being ready to raise a revolt against his authority, were eager to co-operate in a settlement which while true to their Presbyterian principles would yet be moderate and tolerant. Little doubt there is that such a settlement would have been acceptable to most in the land. The tragedy of the time was that Charles considered Presbyterianism "no religion for a gentleman," that he was resolved on Episcopacy as the system of church government most likely to be amenable to his own personal authority. "He knew well bishops would never be reprovers of the Court and the first article of their catechism was non-resistance.

-
1. Smellie's Men of the Covenant. p.41.
 2. Burton's History. VII p.126.

They were the best tools for tyranny in the world."¹ So many of these moderate-minded Resolutioners were to discover before many days were done.

What of the Protesters, the minority party in the Church? From the very day of the Restoration they had made known their fears and their suspicions. A group of them indeed meeting in Edinburgh at the close of August 1660 with Rev. James Guthrie as the moving spirit had drawn up and sent an address to the king.² They besought the king to remember the Covenants he had so solemnly signed, they expressed their fears of designs to overthrow the "blessed work" of Presbytery and "re-introduce prelacy and all those corruptions formerly cast out." They spoke of the "dreadful guiltiness" and the "fearful wrath" that would undoubtedly follow the success of these designs. There was no doubt that men of these strict opinions and forthright expressions would oppose with all their influence and power the course of action that Charles and his counsellors were determined to follow. But by 1660 the influence of these Remonstrants had been failing, they had been losing the sympathy of their fellow countrymen and certainly cannot be taken as representative of the national feeling at this critical juncture.

So the Church of Scotland stood at the time of the Restoration divided and weakened, with no national leader of the stature of Henderson, with most of her ministers and people

1. Kirkton's History pp.131, 132.

2. Brown's Apologeticall Relation. p.69-76. Wodrow's History VI p.68.

eager for a moderate settlement.

As the king's dictatorial reconstruction of the Church took shape between 1660 and 1662 men throughout Scotland looked on and waited and wondered. Parliament was in the king's hands, the nobles were too intent on repairing their shattered fortunes to do other than follow the king's bidding, the common folk of the land, desperately enough engaged in the struggle for survival were weary of conflict. Only in the church might there be any prospect of a stand against the royal tyranny. And tyranny it was. We are grossly deceived if we think of the changes following the Restoration as the product of a government disinterestedly zealous for Episcopacy, or believing that it was acting for the best interest of the people. Charles II and his advisers cared little for forms of church government, indeed for religion scarce at all. Episcopacy was preferred because, as Kirkton clearly saw in the words quoted above, it was far more easily managed than ever Presbytery could be. And the establishment of the episcopal system was meant only as a step to the larger aim of creating in Scotland a servile state, church and state together constantly at the king's command.

Only in the church we say, was there any possibility of a stand against this royal tyranny. But were there even in the church men with eyes to see the issues involved and

and courage to take a stand. Weakness and disunity were so apparent and the desire for peace was so great. Were there even among the Protesters of the South-West men with vision and courage enough for this now? In this "degenerated generation so easily quiet with that which men did once lose their blood and lives to purchase and obtain,"¹ was there to be a stand made against the absolutism of the royal government? or were the liberties of church and state together to go by default?

It was anticipated that the reconstruction of the Church would be received reluctantly in the south and west of the country where Remonstrant influence was strong. In most of the synods there was very slow recognition of the newly appointed leaders of the Church. Only a few in the diocese of Glasgow appeared to welcome the archbishop and not one of those appointed since 1649 acknowledged his jurisdiction. It was felt in Edinburgh that a semi-royal progress through Clydesdale, Galloway and Ayrshire might influence the dwellers in the west country towards a readier acceptance of the new establishment, and in October, 1662 the Earl of Middleton accompanied by a glittering cavalcade of nobles and Privy Councillors made his way from Glasgow through Hamilton, Paisley, Dumfries, Wigtown, Ayr to Dumbarton.² But the pomp and pageantry of the process made little impression on the stubborn folk of the West. They remembered the royal promises that already had been broken,

1. Brown's Apologeticall Relation. Epistle to the Reader.
2. Wodrow History I 282. Kirkton History 152.

they thought on leaders of their own section of the Church, who already had suffered for their attachment to the Covenants, and they were not to be easily reconciled to any system built on such foundations.

When the court arrived in Glasgow after a vain errand, Archbishop Fairfull greeted the company with a woeful tale. The younger ministers were completely obstinate. They had not made any recognition of episcopacy, nor had they declared allegiance to himself. Yet they remained in their charges. Asked to suggest a remedy, he proposed that a blunt alternative be put to the recalcitrant ministers. Let them acknowledge the new government of the Church or else remove from their parishes and leave their manses. So many in these days of change had set former principles aside for the sake of gain, it was not to be supposed that any considerable number of these westland pastors would refuse the royal mandate. The monstrous suggestion, as foolish as it was cruel, was taken up with frivolous lightheartedness by the "maudlin legislators"¹ and on the 1st October 1662 an edict of eviction embodying the Archbishop's plan was authorised. "Ministers who have not obeyed the recent Acts shall forthwith cease the exercise of their ministry: their pulpits shall be declared vacant: parishioners are relieved from payment to them of stipend and from acknowledgement of their ministry on pain of being convicted as conventiclers: non-compliers

1. J.K. Hewison. "The Covenanters." Vol. II p.152.

shall remove beyond the bounds of the Presbytery before 1st November: neglecters of the Anniversary thanksgiving shall be mulcted in one year's stipend and be liable to the full penalty fixed by the Act." All present signed the ordinance. The Duke of Hamilton informed Burnet that "they were all as drunk that day, that they were not capable of considering anything that was laid before them, and would hear of nothing but the executing of the law without any relenting or delay." By such men and in such fashion was this decree enacted that was to mean so much suffering. Speedily news of the decree was carried to the parishes and manses of Scotland among others to the Parish of Wamphray in Dumfriesshire where Rev. John Brown was minister.

CHAPTER II - THE HIDDEN YEARS.

I Youth.

Of the early circumstances of John Brown of Wamphray there is very little that can be set down with real certainty. When in 1662 he steps out into the full light of history, it is from a very shadowy background. Indeed there are extant only two sources of information about his early days, certain letters of Samuel Rutherford, and certain references in the records of the University of Edinburgh.

Among the famous Rutherford letters there are three addressed to Jean Brown and in one of them mention is made of John Brown, described as "your son John." One of the most frequently addressed of Rutherford's correspondents was Marion McNaught, who as certain of his other letters make clear, was the wife of William Fullerton, for some time Provost of Kirkcudbright. In seven of these letters to Marion McNaught, there is mention made of Jean or Jane Brown and in two of these seven, reference is made to John Brown.

In the letters addressed to Marion McNaught there are these references.

Rutherford writes from Anwoth in an undated letter,¹ "I have cause to suit this of you, and show it to Thomas Carson, Fergus and Jean Brown." In another letter also undated, but clearly written late in 1629 or early in 1630, since

1. Letters of Samuel Rutherford. Ed. Dr. Bonar. 1891. Letter XVIII

mention is made of the dangerous condition of his wife who died in June, 1630, Rutherford has the sentence, Remember me heartily to Jane Brown, desire her to pray for me and my wife; I do remember her." From Anwoth on July 21, 1630¹ Rutherford writes again to his correspondent and concludes, "Remember my dearest love to John Gordon to whom I will write when I am strong and to John Brown, Grizzel, Samuel and William, grace upon them.

From Anwoth on March, 2, 1634² he writes, "I believe you will not forget me, and you will desire Jane Brown, Thomas Carson and Marion Carson to help me."

In a letter written from Edinburgh on April 5, 1636³ Rutherford writes, "Remember my love to Jean Gordon, to my sister Jean Brown, to Grizzel, to your husband."

On July 8, 1637, Rutherford writes from his place of exile in Aberdeen,⁴ "Remember me to Grizzel and Jane Brown."

In the same year, September 7, Rutherford makes fuller mention of John Brown,⁵ "Remember my love to John Carson and Mr. John Brown: I never could get my love off that man: I think Christ hath something to do with him."

In the three letters addressed directly to Jean Brown the relevant mentions are these.

From Aberdeen during 1637⁶ "I know you see your day

-
1. Letters XXXII
 2. Letters XXVIII
 3. Letters LVII
 4. Letters CCXXI
 5. Letters CCXLIII
 6. Letters LXXXIV

melting away by little and little, and that in short time you will be put beyond time's bounds."

From the same city on March 7, 1639¹ Rutherford writes to his "well beloved and dear sister," and expresses the hope that "ye are near your lodging."

Finally on 13th March, 1637² Rutherford writes, "Therefore I commend to you Christ, as your best living and longest living husband, and the staff of your old age. Let Him now have the rest of your days, and think not much of a storm upon the ship that Christ saileth in, there shall no passenger fall overboard, but the crazed ship and the sea-sick passengers shall come to land safe." Later in the same letter, "I rejoice to hear your son John is coming to visit Christ and taste of his love. I had always (as I said often to you) a great love to dear Mr. John Brown because I thought I saw Christ in Him, more than in his brethren: fain would I write to him, to stand by my sweet Master; and the joy I have if he will appear for and side with my Lord Jesus."

From these scant references certain probabilities at least may be established. Mrs. Fullerton, the Marion McNaught of the letters was a well known Galloway lady.³ She was born of an ancient and honourable house in the south of Scotland, was described in her epitaph as "sister to John McNaught of Kilquhanatie an ancient and honourable baron," and became the wife of William Fullerton, who served as Provost of Kirkcudbright.

1. Letter CXI
2. Letters CXXXI
3. Letters: Intro to Letter VI.

Her mother's brother was Gordon of Lochinvar, later Lord Kenmure. It is obvious from the letters that Jean Brown was 'one of the selectest associates of the famous Rutherford circle.'¹ She is mentioned as on terms of close intimacy with the other members. Her children and Mrs. Fullerton's family are linked very closely to one another in Rutherford's reference to them. It can therefore be taken that Mrs. Brown (may the single mention of Fergus give the name of her husband?) must have been of a station in life which enabled her to mingle freely with Mr. Fullerton, and Viscountess Kenmure and the other members of the Galloway group.

Mr. Fullerton's house we know to have been in Kirkcudbright. The Brown family must have resided in the town or in its immediate vicinity. It is probable that John Brown if not born in Kirkcudbright must at least have spent a considerable part of his early life in the little Galloway town.

The fact of her correspondence with Rutherford and the terms in which she addresses her, as well as her close friendship with Mrs. Fullerton, give evidence of the spiritual qualities of this mother of John Brown. Rutherford calls her "well beloved and dear sister," and asks for her prayers. He commends Christ afresh to her as the staff of her old age" and speaks of the immortal hope they share" beyond time's bounds." It would seem that by the date of these letter 1637, Mrs. Brown

1. Rutherford and some of his Correspondents. A. Whyte. p.69.

was an elderly woman. "I hope you are near your lodging," he writes; and again, "I know you see your day melting away by little and little." And most specifically he talks of her "old age."

That John Brown had at least one brother appears from Letter CXI where Rutherford writes to his mother, "I desire Patrick to give Christ his young love, even the flowers of it, and put it by all others." To this there may be added the evidence from Brown's will,¹ that there was at least one sister Elizabeth, and further that his father remarried, following the death of his first wife. Of this marriage with Agnes Blair there were two sons Thomas and James and one daughter Marion.

Of Brown himself, we learn from the letter that he was held in high regard by the saintly Rutherford. The older man rejoiced to see that the godly influence of his mother was bearing fruit in the life of her son. He saw much promise in him, "I think Christ has something to do with him," and he cherished for him a very real affection. "I never could get my love off that man," "I always had a great love for dear Mr. John Brown," "I thought I saw Christ in him more than in his brethren." The title of Master, given to John Brown in one of the letters to Mrs. Fullerton dated 1637, is confirmation of a fact we shall find given elsewhere, that by this time Brown had completed his Arts studies at University.

1. Wodrow's M.S.S. National Library of Scotland. Folio.60. No.90.

McWard speaks of Brown in 1677 as "upon the brink of the grave" in a context which suggests he had reached a fair span of life and Hewison and others cannot be far from the truth with the suggestion of 1610 as the year of his birth.

These references taken together teach us, not a great deal about the details of Brown's early life, but quite a deal about the atmosphere of it. We can imagine him brought up in a home that must have been fairly well-to-do, mingling with the family of the Provost and his Lady, worshipping in the old church of Kirkcudbright once the chapel of a Greyfriar's Monastery but still and for a hundred years later used as the Parish Church,¹ brought up under the ministry of Rev. Robert Glendinning, later to be imprisoned for his faith's sake,² and always within his own home being nurtured and influenced by that saintly woman his mother and the circle of godly folk she had made her intimate friends. Brown was being soundly prepared for the work of later years.

II University Days.

In 1626 we learn of him from a different source. We find his name - the Joannes Brown which was to be set on the title page of many a volume - on the Matriculation Roll of Edinburgh University.³

How he came to study there we cannot tell. It might seem

1. G.D. Elder's "Kirkcudbright". p.24.
2. History of Dumfries & Galloway. Sir Herbert Maxwell. p.243.
3. Matriculation Roll of the University of Edinburgh, for 1626.

strange that with Glasgow nearer and St. Andrew's a very much older place of learning he should choose Edinburgh. Perhaps it was Samuel Rutherford, himself a graduate of Edinburgh, who influenced his decision. So in 1626 he came to Edinburgh and to a college rather than to a university.¹ For though James VI had granted it by charter the right of conferring degrees it was in other respects no more than a college, governed by the Provost and Town Council of Edinburgh. It was situated in the Kirk-of-Field where once had stood a great collegiate Church destroyed by English invaders in 1544.

Although the early regulations of the "Town's College" are framed to deal with a residential student body, there was not accommodation available for all in the University. Two-thirds had to find lodgings in the town.²

Buchan in his life of Montrose talks of the interest and time that the young earl gave to archery, to horsemanship, to golf.³ But Montrose was a young sprig of nobility and normal regulations may not so strictly have been applied to him. For the ordinary student like our own John Brown, student years were fully occupied with sterner tasks than sport.⁴ Both in-College and out-College students had to assemble early in the morning, at about five or six o'clock and they had a long day's work every day throughout ten or eleven months of the year. Even on "Play-days" students were allowed to go to the fields for only two hours. Although only twenty per cent of the

-
1. Story of the University of Edinburgh. p.121. Sir Alexander Grant.
 2. Story of the University of Edinburgh. p.138. Sir Alexander Grant.
 3. Montrose, by John Buchan. p.37.
 4. Story of the University of Edinburgh. p.142ffs. Sir Alexander Grant.

students at this time entered the ministry, a religious character pervaded the college. Every evening the Principal conducted family prayers. Every Wednesday he instructed all the scholars in "the knowledge of God and of their duties." On Sundays all the students attended Church for the morning and afternoon services after which they returned to the College and gave account of the sermons.

When Brown entered the University the Principal was John Adamson, who is remembered best as the compiler of fulsome addresses presented to King James on his visit to Scotland in 1617. The Professor of Divinity was Henry Charteris. Brown's own tutor or regent bore the same plain name as himself.

The circumstances of the time were not conducive to men of strong character or opinions being allowed to teach in the Universities. Mediocre men willing to conform to the royal designs had been set in office, for events were beginning to take the tragic road that led to the troubles of later years.

The college curriculum¹ was one that lasted through four sessions. There was little change for most of this century in the subjects and authors dealt with, and we can trace Brown's studies although we know nothing of his personal life in these student years.

In the first or Bajan year Latin and Greek were his studies, his text-books Cicero, Homer and Hesiod. Large portions

1. Story of the University of Edinburgh. p.148. Sir Alexander Grant.

of these books had to be committed to memory and translations into the vernacular and vice versa had to be made.

In the second or Semi-bajan year the main work was Rhetoric and the study of Aristotle's Organon.

In the third or Bachelor year a beginning was made to Hebrew Grammar and further work done in Rhetoric and Dialectical Analysis.

In the fourth or Magstrand year after a revision of all that had gone before, works on astronomy, geography and anatomy were studied.

The method of university study was pure scholasticism.¹ There was no originality in presentation, no thought of departure from the beaten track. It could scarcely be otherwise, for the regents were beginners themselves, recent graduates, with no time to do more than elaborate the dictates of their own teacher.

Along with the lectures disputations, after the pattern of the medieval academic discussions, were continually being arranged by the regents. We can see the mark of these disputations stamped across all Brown's controversial writing. As a mental discipline they had many valuable aspects, developing orderly thinking, fluent utterance, clever argument. But they involved very often nothing more than argument for argument's sake. There was no sympathetic appreciation of the opponent's position; they tended too much to what was merely academic and argumentative and pedantic.

1. G.D. Henderson. Religious Life in XVIIth century Scotland. ch XI
"Scottish Theological Learning in the 17th Century."

The years that Brown spent at his studies in Edinburgh were years in which murmurs of the approaching storm could be heard, for Charles was now on the throne and the pace towards national strife and civil war was quickening; No gathering of young men could fail to be concerned with the rights and wrongs of the issues at stake, least of all the students of the capital city of Scotland. One of Brown's fellow-students, though a year behind was Robert Leighton,¹ afterwards protagonist of the compromise Brown so bitterly assailed. They surely did not guess then the tremendous gulf that was to divide them in later days.

On the 24th July, 1630² Brown graduated with the M.A. degree.

And from this point forward for over twenty years darkness descends upon the record. Nowhere in university or ecclesiastical or public records is any mention of him to be found. How were these years spent? Somewhere within them there must have been a term of divinity, but no trace remains. Perhaps like his contemporary Leighton he spent years of travel and study on the Continent. Perhaps like many another in these days he became for some time a tutor. But of certain information or even the hint of it, there is nothing for these twenty years and more.

The only possible glint of light and it is the merest pinpoint is contained in the letter written on March 13, 1637³ by

-
1. Matriculation Roll of Edinburgh University, for 1627.
 2. Graduation Roll of Edinburgh University for 1630. Fasti.Vol.II
 3. Rutherford's Letters. CXXXI. p.224

Samuel Rutherford to Mrs. Brown. He writes, "I rejoice to hear your son John is coming to visit Christ and taste of his love. I hope he shall not lose his pains or rue of that choice." Rutherford cannot be speaking of any first profession of faith in Christ, for he declares in the next sentence, "I thought I saw Christ in him more than in his brethren." Lockerby is surely mistaken when he finds evidence in these words that Brown "was beginning to take the same view of the simple and spiritual worship of Christ that Mr. Rutherford had taken, instead of the ceremonial and unscriptural mode of worship that was then imposed on them."¹ In the absence of any statement to the contrary, it seems much more likely from the training and influences of Brown's early days that he shared Rutherford's views from boyhood. It may well be that the words of the letter indicate John Brown's acceptance of a call to the ministry which would suggest that after some years travelling or tutoring, he took up the studies that led him into the ministry of the Gospel.

Lord Eustace Percy in introducing his hero John Knox declares that "it is difficult to say of any man when his real life begins."² Of John Brown it may be said that his real life work did not begin till the clanging bells of the Restoration forced him on to the stage of history. By that time he was a man of fifty years of age. Before him lay less than twenty

1. Lockerby's Life of John Brown of Wamphray. p.17.

2. John Knox, Lord Eustace Percy. p.19.

years in which the work must be done for which he would be remembered. The half century through which he had lived had been a tremendous one, full of revolutionary events which have few parallels in British history. But in these stirring happenings Brown took no part significant enough to be set down in the records of the time. Not till 1655¹ can we speak of him with any real degree of assurance, and we find him then installed as minister of the Parish of Wamphray in Upper Annandale.

III Wamphray Parish.

Wamphray is a small parish in the Presbytery of Lochmaben.² Its greatest length from north-east to south-west is eight and three quarter miles, its greatest breadth is three and five eighth miles. The name Wamphray is said to be derived from the two ancient British words "Uamph Fri" meaning a hollow or deep den in the forest. The natural features of the district lend probability to this derivation. The rivulet called Wamphray Water, which divides the parish along the line of its greatest length, runs through a wooded glen. That part of the parish which lies along the Annan is fertile farm land. There is more hilly and wooded country in the northern part.

Ancient British and Roman relics are to be found in the parish. A military highway built by the Romans ran almost due north through Wamphray and traces of it are to be seen still.

-
1. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ (New Edition) Vol. II p.224.
 2. "Wamphray," by John Paterson, 1906. Chp. 1. "History of Wamphray".
Statistical Account of 1794. Vol. XII p.602 ff.
New Statistical Account Vol. IV p.137.

Two great unhewn stones stand about three miles apart by the side of this farm road and while some maintain that they served as Roman milestones, most antiquarians believe them to be Druidical relics. It would appear that the Glen was a favourite haunt of the Druids and a centre of their worship. British and Danish names in the parish suggest the conflict and final mingling of the races in the years that followed the Roman withdrawal. The lands of Wamphray passed through the hands of several families till in the 15th century they became the property of the Johnstones, kinsmen of the powerful Johnstones of Annandale, in whose possession they remained till the middle of the 18th century. Before the Union of the Crowns and the subsequent pacification of the Borders the Johnstones of Wamphray and their clan had a distinct reputation as free-booters and cattle rievvers. There is a notable ballad from the 16th century which commemorates a rieving expedition and a skirmish that followed and which finds its climax in the words:

"And of a' the lads that I do ken
A Wamphray lad's the king o' men."

With the Union of the Crowns and the Pacification of the Border countries' the Wamphray lads' had to settle down as peaceful farmers and herdsmen.

"To plough the heath, uproot the weed,
Enrich the soil, and drain the mead,
Till flocks and herds in plenty feed
In fertile flowery Annandale."

The population of the parish in 1794 was 458 but perhaps in the 17th century it may have been a little greater, for in earlier times it would seem there was more land under cultivation,

the plough ran further up the hill and among the hills than in later years.

The parish was entirely a "country parish," with, in the 17th century, no centre of population greater than the farm cottages. Building was very primitive. When the church and manse in 1680 had clay floors, unglazed windows and heather thatched roofs, it is not hard to guess what the farm houses and the peasant dwellings were like.

The people worked on the land and there were the few tradesmen that a farming community in those days required, the wright and the blacksmith and the cooper. Some weaving also was done and a certain John Sprot conducted a waulkmill towards the end of the 17th century.

We have seen that Druidical worship had been carried on in Wamphray Glen. There is no record of the establishment of Christian worship there, but most probably it was brought by the Roman soldiers who passed along the northern road and made their camps in the district.

In 1265 Wamphray Church mentioned for the first time in extant records is taxed £2: 13: 4:¹ towards the Deanery of Glasgow. Nearly one hundred years later we find the advowson of Wamphray Church in the hands of Corrie of Corrie and passed by him to new lairds in 1357. In 1545 we note an order of the head of the Johnstone clan to the parson of Lochmaben

1. Paterson's Wamphray. chp. III. "Church Affairs."

to place a clergyman in Wamphray Church. A secular priest named Carruthers was accordingly placed in the charge.

Following the Reformation in the confusion of the times and because of the shortage of ministers available, the church fell into sore disrepair and Johnstone and Wamphray were conjoined in one Church under one minister. In 1602 under a mandate from the Privy Council Johnstone of Lockwood undertook the repair of the church. But even in this state of repair it was no place of beauty or comfort. Rev. Charles Dickson who occupied the same church at the end of the following century (a new building was not erected till 1834) describes it as long and narrow, fifty-three feet by eighteen feet. The wall at the door is eight feet high, and the interior one foot lower than the surface of the ground outside. The floor is gravel and closely seated, and affords a confined accommodation for only two hundred sitters. The building was "damp, dirty and disagreeable in both summer and winter."

It was not till 1622 that Wamphray was disjoined from Johnstone and not till ten years later that the first licensed and ordained minister took charge. Rev. John Hastie, M.A., of Edinburgh¹ seems to have been Royalist in sympathy and roughly treated by Cromwell's men when in power. In 1661 Parliament "granted £50 to his widow for her husband's loyalty to the King and his sufferings therefor."²

Somewhere about 1655³ John Brown was inducted as minister

1. Fasti. Ecclesiae Scoticae (New Edition) Vol.II p.224.
2. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae (New Edition) Vol.II p.224.
3. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae (New Edition) Vol.II p.224.

of the Parish and for the five years that followed ministered to his people quietly and acceptably. A century and a half later Rev. Robert Burns of Paisley wrote¹ "We have the best of evidence in favour of the fidelity, the talent and the success, with which he exercised his pastoral functions among the people of his charge. To them he was tenderly attached and feeling was mutual. While they had the principal share of his anxieties and cares and while he studied to act in strict conformity to his ordination vows, his exertions at the same time, were not confined rigidly and exclusively, to the people of Wamphray. From the scarcity of active and zealous ministers at that period, he found it necessary to enlarge the sphere of his ministerial exertions; and the inhabitants of the district in which his charge lay, were admitted to share in the benefits of his public labours. In that district his name still lives in traditional remembrance." Whatever historical facts underlie that "traditional remembrance." we cannot doubt that in the years of pastoral ministry at Wamphray Brown exercised the same conscientious efficiency that characterised all the work of his later years.

IV Eviction and Exile.

In the months that followed the Restoration, Brown in his quiet little country parish watched with growing dismay the course that events were taking.

1. Preface to "Treatise on Prayer," written by Rev. Robert Burns, Glasgow, 1822.

He speaks later of the hopes he had cherished in 1660, "Hopes of good and desirable days both for Church and State" when the "yoke of the oppressor was broken." But laments "how faces were filled with confusion because of the sad disappointment which now the Scottish people did meet with." For now "the glorious work of the Reformation which had been wonderfully carried on by the mighty power of the Most High and cemented with the blood of His Saints ... was razed to the very foundation ... all things growing daily worse and worse." ¹

By the decree of October 1662 the royal absolutism was to lay its hand upon his own ministry and must be acknowledged in his own parish. It is obvious from what followed that John Brown like over three hundred others in this courageous South-West had no thought of complying with the government's will. Parliament and nobility might let Scotland's liberties be bartered for gold and position, the mass of the people might be blind even yet to the intentions of King and councillors, but here in the West Country were simple folk strong in their faith, loyal to their Church who would now bow even to a King's command nor be coerced by his threats.

We know that Brown of Wamphray accepted eviction from his charge rather than comply with the Glasgow decree.

Indeed so steadfast was he in his own determination and so incensed at the compliance of some of his neighbour ministers that we find him in just a month's time from the date of the decree of eviction appearing before the Privy Council on the

1. Apologeticall Relation. p.68.

charge of abusing certain ministers of the district for breaking pledges that they had given him to stand fast against the decree. The records tell us "Upon the same day, November 6, 1662, the Rev. Mr. John Brown, minister at Wamphray in the South was brought before the Council," and continue "Mr. John Brown of Wamphray being convened before the Council, for abusing and reproaching some ministers, for keeping synod with the Archbishop of Glasgow, by calling them perjured knaves and villains, did acknowledge that he called them false knaves for so doing, because they had promised the contrary to him. The Council ordains him to be secured close prisoner in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh till further order."¹

Rev. James Barr, one-time minister of Wamphray speaks² of a cave near the Manse of Wamphray where Brown lay in concealment for some time, and quotes a local tradition that he was taken there, and mounted on horse back, his legs tied beneath. At the Annandale Arms, Moffat where the troopers halted, a countryman set his cap upon the minister's head to shield him from the cold.

For five weeks Brown lay prisoner in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, a noisome place, but at the end of that time ill-health brought him before the notice of the Council again. On the 11th December the Council received a petition from the prisoner. "Anent a petition presented by Mr. John Brown minister

1. Register of the Privy Council of Scotland. 3rd Series.

Vol. I. p.278.

2. Rev. James Barr. "The Scottish Covenanters." (Glasgow 1946) p.178.

at Wamphray now prisoner in Edinburgh, showing that for some speeches rashly and inconsiderately uttered against some neighbour ministers, he has been kept close prisoner these five weeks past; and that seeing that by want of free air and ordinary necessaries for maintaining his crazy body, he is in hazard to lose his life, humbly therefore desiring warrant to be put to liberty, upon caution to enter his prison in person when he shall be commanded as the petition bears. Which being at length heard and considered, the lords of council ordain the supplicant to be put at liberty forth of the Tolbooth, he first obliging himself to remove and depart off the king's dominions, and not to return without license from his Majesty and council under pain of death."¹

Wodrow comments² "I need not observe this unusual severity against this good man." "And severe the penalty was for a few quick words spoken in understandable anger against men whose courage was not equal to his own. But perhaps in later years the Councillors of Scotland had reason to repent of their cruel decree of banishment. His exile gave him freedom to write, and the "able and damaging works"³ of later years were a greater inspiration to the Covenanting cause that even his presence with the persecuted could have been.

-
1. Register of Privy Council of Scotland 3rd Series.Vol.I p.303.
 2. Wodrow's History Vol. I p.142.
 3. K. Hewison. "The Covenanters" Vol. II. p.161.

On 23rd December we find him again petitioning the Council for leave to stay in the country a little beyond the time granted him. "Anent a petition by Mr. John Brown, late minister at Wamphray desiring the time of his removal off the kingdom may be prorogate, in regard that he is neither as yet able to provide himself of necessaries, and the weather is unseasonable that he cannot have the opportunity of a ship, as the petition at length bears: which being heard, read and considered, the lords of council do grant liberty to remain within this kingdom for the space of two months after the 11th December last, he carrying himself in the meantime peaceably and acting nothing in prejudice of the present government."¹

It was about the beginning of March 1663 that Brown left his native land behind and on the 12th of the month arrived in Holland which he had chosen as the place of his exile.²

There had for many years been close links between Scotland and the Low Countries. "Rotterdam", writes William Steven, "at a very early period, became much frequented by the British: and the Scots proverbial for their enterprising spirit, were among the first foreigners that settled in this city."³ In 1642 the municipal authorities of Rotterdam furnished a place of worship for the Scottish inhabitants of the city and provided funds for the salary of the minister. On the recommen-

-
1. Register of the Privy Council of Scotland. 3rd Series. Vol. I. p. 312.
 2. Paper: "Informatio de Statu et Conditione Joannis Brown. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 60. No. 64.
 3. Steven: Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p. 1.

dation of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, the minister of Rhynd in Perthshire Mr. Alexander Petrie was called to be first minister of this Scots Kirk and continued as minister for twenty years, dying in September 1662.¹

His successor was Rev. John Hogg or Hoog² who was inducted to the charge on 3rd December 1662 and remained minister, latterly with a colleague, until 1689. He was therefore minister of the Scots Kirk when Brown arrived in the city.

He was not the only exile in Rotterdam. He was indeed one of the earliest of a great flood of refugees who during the next twenty years were to find refuge in the Netherlands. A prominent Scots minister who had preceeded him there, and who was to be his friend and fellow worker throughout the next two decades was Rev. Robert McWard, deposed minister of the Outer High Church of Glasgow.³ As a student in St. Andrews, he had been greatly beloved by Samuel Rutherford, then Professor of Theology there. He had accompanied Rutherford as amanuensis when the Professor went to London as commissioner to the Westminster Assembly.⁴ The influence of Rutherford had made McWard an uncompromising opponent of absolutism and episcopacy. For five years he had laboured in Glasgow, and then like Brown had to face the challenge of the new situation in Church and State. He was not content to await eviction. In February 1661 he

1. Steven. Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.3.

2. Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.23.

3. Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.26.

4. Howie, "Scots Worthies" p.476. Burnet's History. Vol.I. p.161.

preached a sermon in the Town Kirk of Glasgow against the 'glaring defections' of the times. He was arrested, carried to Edinburgh and charged with "sedition and treasonable preaching." Upon the 5th or 6th July sentence of banishment was passed upon him and he embarked for Holland to live out the remainder of his life there.¹ This zealous defender of the Church was already therefore in Rotterdam when Brown arrived and between the two exiles there grew up a warm friendship which made them close fellow workers in the years that followed.

We can appreciate John Brown's sorrow of heart as he entered Rotterdam where he was to be so long an exile. Behind him Scotland lay in gathering darkness. The king and his counsellors were clearly bent on an absolutism which could give no place to a free Presbyterian Church. The Covenants had been burned, bishops lorded it over the Church of Knox and Melville. There was sore need of men to maintain the tottering cause, to strengthen the hands of those within the Church who would stand true to Covenanted Presbytery. And he had been cast out. His own parish of Wamphray must be given to a creature of the bishops. He could not even gather his faithful people in the glen by Wamphray Water or on the uplands beyond. There could be no place for him among the ministers who throughout the West Country would maintain the cause of Kirk and Covenant. He was an exile, doomed to a life-long banishment. What could he do to bear the burden of the times and fulfil his ministry?

1. Wodrow's History. Vol. I. p.207.

CHAPTER 3 - LIFE AND WORK IN HOLLAND.

The answer to these questions began to appear when in the year 1665 there made its appearance in Scotland a book entitled, "An Apologeticall Relation of the particular sufferings of the faithful ministers and professors of the Church of Scotland since 1660 etc., by a Well-wisher to the good old cause." Its author was John Brown, it had been printed in Rotterdam in 1665 and immediately thereafter began to be disseminated throughout Scotland, where writes King Hewison it "staggered the council."¹ "He had returned a Roland for an Oliver out of the place of his exile."

Brown had determined that, exile though he was, cut off by cruel banishment and the waste of seas from the land where his church was in such dire need, he would not be prevented from taking his part in their struggle. Through the ministry of the written word he could play his part, and to this ministry he gave himself whole-heartedly for the years of life that remained. The defence of the orthodox faith in general, and in particular the defence and furtherance of the cause of Covenanted Presbytery were his great themes.

From the details of information which have come down to us we can understand his simple diligent way of life throughout the years of exile. His main place of residence was Rotterdam

1. J.K. Hewison. "The Covenanters." I p.189.

though at times it seems he lived also in Utrecht. We have seen that his family was probably in comfortable circumstances, he may have supported himself in Holland from patrimonial assets. Perhaps he had help as some of the exiles did from loyal friends at home.¹ It may be on the other hand that his writings were his only source of income.

We are told that he was a "painfull helper" of the Scottish Church at Rotterdam, that he often preached and lectured for the two ministers of the Church.² We know that he took part too in private meetings held in homes, like that of Mr. Andrew Russell, an elder of the Church, where he would join in prayer with them and in the study of the word of God.³

But primarily Brown gave himself to study and to writing. The work of the years in Holland gives proof of his unflagging diligence as student and writer. We do not know if he had published any work during his ministry in Wamphray, certainly nothing has survived from that period of his life. But over in Holland he gave himself to his task. The cause of the faith, the cause of his beloved Church of Scotland he could best serve through the ministry of the written word, and he gave himself to that ministry, as a man "whose heart was in his work."⁴

His writings may be broadly divided into three classes, though some are difficult to classify and the divisions of necessity overlap.

-
1. History of Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.29. Lady Kenmure afforded pecuniary assistance to Mr. McWard and other banished ministers.
 2. Steven's History of Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.38.
 3. " " " " " " " " p.67.
 4. " " " " " " " " p.70.

There are works in general defence of the orthodox faith, written very often as replies to heretical positions that others had sought to maintain. Among these may be set "Libri Duo contra Woltzogenium et Velthusium," published in Amsterdam 1670, "De Causa Dei contra Anti-Sabbatarios Tractatus," in two volumes, published Rotterdam 1674-6, "Quakerism, the Pathway to Paganism" published Edinburgh 1678.

Secondly there are devotional and practical works. Some of these seem to be compilations of sermons and lectures given in Holland. Into this class would fall "Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life" published in 1677, "Christ in believers, the Hope of Glory" published 1703, "The Life of Justification Opened Up" published 1695, "Treatise on Prayer" published first in 1720, "Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans" published in 1766, "A Mirror or Looking-Glass for Saint or Sinner," published 1793, "Enoch's Testimony Opened up" published 1771.

Thirdly, there are works written specifically in reference to the suffering Church of Scotland which was always foremost in Brown's mind. These include the "Apologeticall Relation" already mentioned, "Apology for the Oppressed Persecuted Ministers," published 1677, "The History of the Indulgence" published 1678, "The Banders Disbanded," published 1679, "The Life of Faith in Time of Affliction" published in 1679, and its sequel "Swan Song" published in 1680. In addition to these, there remains.

an unpublished manuscript, preserved in Edinburgh University Library, entitled "Apologia pro Ecclesia Scoticana," giving in Latin a history and defence of the Church of Scotland.

There have survived also a number of his letters written in pursuance of the same ministry, to inspire and strengthen the suffering Church at home. Always he was eager to keep in touch with the leaders of the Covenanting remnant, messengers passed to and fro with information, and it is probable that Brown exercised a profound influence by his letters of which certain remain.

And all the time that Brown studied and wrote in the Low Countries events in Scotland were moving along their fateful course. Indeed to understand his work we must keep the Scottish background in mind. It is that which determines the subject-matter and emphasis of his writings.

The attitude of the Government in Scotland developed in a way which showed three distinct stages. 1) From 1660 to the Pentland Rising in 1666. 2) from the Rising to 1679, a period which might be designated the Period of the Indulgences, and 3) from the rising which culminated in the Battle of Bothwell Bridge to 1688. Brown's writings find their best interpretation when set against these varying backgrounds.

I. The First Period.

In 1662 Brown had himself accepted eviction and finally

banishment for refusing to acknowledge the royal absolutism which had restored episcopacy, and for speaking against it. His attitude, to the surprise of the Government, to the amazement of men like Sharp who had made confident prophecies otherwise, was the attitude taken by over three hundred ministers¹ of the Church mainly in Brown's own part of the country, the South and West. The gauntlet so ruthlessly thrown down by the servants of the Royal Despot was taken up not by nobles or parliament but by these courageous ministers of the Church, who in the late autumn of 1662 left churches and manse behind them for conscience sake. Writes Dodds "From the moment of that act of self-devotion and self-discipline, the struggle for liberty, though long, chequered and severe was never hopeless, never ultimately in doubt."²

Into the vacancies left by these ministers there were now thrust new incumbents, strangers from the north for the most part, and the majority of them totally untrained and unfit for the work they were called to do. It is not necessary to look to Covenanting records for ridicule of these King's Curates as they came to be called. The Earl of Tweeddale writing to Lauderdale describes them, as "insufficient, scandalous, impudent fellows."³ And Burnet openly makes ridicule of them, "The worst preachers I ever heard," "Ignorant to a reproach," "indeed the dregs and refuse of the northern parts."⁴

-
1. Rev. R. Logan. "History of the United Free Church. Appendix. p.213.
 2. Dodds. "Fifty Years Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters. p.121.
 3. Lauderdale Papers. II. p.207.
 4. Burnet's History. Vol. I. p.221.

It was scarce to be wondered at that the loyal church folk of the South-West should yearn after their old ministers. If these were not allowed to preach in their churches, then the congregations would go to them. And so there began the famous "Conventicles," meetings on the moors and hillsides of the West country at which the ousted ministers preached to their people.

The Government immediately brought into being legislation to deal with this development. "The Bishops Drag-net" became law. "Separation and Disobedience to Ecclesiastical Authority," "Absenteeism from the parishes," became crimes to be punished by heavy fines. "The Mile Act" prohibited the ministry from any approach to their former parishes."¹ Nor was the legislation intended to remain dead law. Parliament had already given the Council powers to raise armed forces. Now the Government took advantage of these powers to levy detachments of troops, quartering them in the troubled areas and giving them the task of breaking the spirit of the recusants.

"The result was that which always will be the result of putting the enforcement of civil law into the hands of soldiers, license, oppression, insult,"² From 1663 forward the southwestern areas passed through a period of bitter oppression. Curates passed the names of absentees at church to the local commander, troops were quartered on the homes of those suspected of disaffection, attenders at conventicles were grievously fined,

1. Act. Parl. Scot. VII 455 Act. 9.

2. Hill Burton's History of Scotland. Vol. VII. p.169.



and throughout the countryside, a brutal, debauched soldiery conducted a rule of terror. Even Lang admits that "the inconvenience of a drunken commander, still more the excesses of his soldiers, must have been intolerable."¹

Little wonder that in November 1666 the sorely tried peasantry should break into resistance. A local "act" of cruelty led to an ill-considered revolt that was crushed by the forces of General Dalziel on the barren slopes of the Pentland Hills.

It was against this background, oppression and cruelty in his own home country, that Brown took up pen to write his first book.

Hewison speaks of the Council as being "staggered" by the appearance of Brown's Apologeticall Relation. And well it might be. Till now the Council might dismiss the restlessness of the ministers and people in South-West Scotland as ill-considered, and intellectually unsound, the mere obstinacy of an ignorant peasantry. Now in his book Brown made clear the important and vital principles which were at stake and the validity of the cause for which the Covenanting remnant was contending. In the introduction Brown sets down his purpose in writing "that such as had hitherto valiantly resisted, to the loss of their means and liberty, might be strengthened and confirmed in their resolution, and the more encouraged.

1. Lang's History of Scotland. Vol. III. p.306.

to endure afflictions when they should see that they did suffer for righteousness' sake."¹ In twenty-three chapters Brown dealt with every aspect of the issues at stake. The history of the church in the years since the Reformation was set down plainly. A trenchant defence followed of Argyle, of Guthrie and of others who had suffered imprisonment.

Then step by step Brown took up the points at issue. Presentation to charges by patrons and collation by bishops were shown to be invalid. The civil and ecclesiastical supremacy claimed by the Restoration regime was examined and Brown did not shrink from vindicating resistance to such unlawful claims even to the point of defensive war. Conventicles were defended and reasons given for non-attendance at the preaching of the curates. The Covenants were vindicated and covenant-breaking shown to be a dreadful sin. So Brown made it clear that the Covenanters in Scotland were not suffering for "punctilios or inconsiderable trifles"² but for firm and valid principles.

In a letter written to McWard Brown makes clear his anticipation that the "Apologeticall Relation" would become a matter of controversy at home. He writes, "What raging and foaming may be at home at the Apology, you may easily conjecture, and what they have done or resolved to do with it, we shall hear, I expect by the next."³

-
1. Brown's Apologeticall Relation. Introduction.
 2. Brown's Apologeticall Relation. Introduction.
 3. Wodrow MSS. Folio 59, No. 9.

The Council was not slow to acknowledge the dangerous import of the book and at once reacted vigorously. It was proclaimed seditious, and ordered to be burned by the hangman. A fine of £2000 Scots was to be inflicted upon anyone possessing it. Sharp forwarded a copy of the book to Lauderdale and described it as "a damned book"¹ which had fired the West and turned the country's quarrel into a defiance of the Crown. Mrs. James Guthrie, wife of the martyred minister and her daughter Sophia, refusing to give information about the book, a copy of which they possessed, were banished to a prison in Shetland.²

The importance of this book for the years that followed was very real indeed. It made clear the principles for which the Covenanters contended, to themselves and to all their countrymen. It heartened and inspired those who were in the fiery furnace of oppression. It established Brown's position although an exile, as one of the great leaders of the Covenanting movement.

In the library of the University of Edinburgh there is preserved a Manuscript, bound now in four volumes bearing the title "Apologia pro Ecclesia Scoticana a.d. 1660 misere afflictata." Wodrow writes of this work, that "The Apologeticall Relation" appears to be an abbreviate of this in English."³ The relationship between the two is not that of direct translation, there are matters dealt with in each which are not included in the other, but for the most part the subject matter is the same,

1. Laing. M.SS. 784.

2. Wodrow's History. Vol. II. p.7.

3. Wodrow's History. Vol. I. p.141.

and the manner of dealing with it in each work is very alike.

The Manuscript History has two large opening chapters on the History of the Church in Scotland, a reference to its legendary beginnings, a detailed account of the Acts of Assemblies and difficulties of the Church between the Reformation and the Restoration. Then he deals with the themes which we have already noted in the 'Apologeticall Relation:' the evils of patronage and collation, the grounds of refusal to observe Anniversary Day, the oath of allegiance, the lawfulness of defensive war, the right of banished ministers to preach and of their people to hear them, the unlawfulness of acknowledging the curates, a vindication of the National Covenant and of the Solemn League and Covenant, the sin and danger of covenant-breaking.

To these themes are added an account of the sufferings of those who took part in the Pentland Rising of 1666, the testimonies of those who suffered and a vindication of the armed rising.

The writing of this history was therefore continued for some little time after the publication of the Apologeticall Relation in 1665.

Brown was always conscious of the need to vindicate the cause of Scottish Presbyterianism before the wider Christian world¹ and no doubt this work was intended to bring before a wider public the rights and sufferings of his brethren in

1. Apologeticall Relation - Preface to Reader.

Scotland. Perhaps the success of the Apologeticall Relation made the publication of this work seem less necessary.

A note accompanying the manuscript explains that John Brown gave the work to Charles Gordon, one time minister at Dalmeny, to be presented by him to the first free General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and it was accordingly presented to the General Assembly of 1692.

That Brown's conviction of the lawfulness of resistance to tyranny was no mere theory, seems to find confirmation in certain doings of the year 1666. In that year England and Holland were at war and certain engagements were entered into between the Dutch government and some of the Scottish exiles. A resolution of the States-General, dated 15th July 1666 talks of "certain friends of religion" who were ready to "do their utmost to get possession of some one or more towns or fortresses." Their High Mightinesses feel themselves called upon to give assurance .. that assistance shall be promptly sent."¹ There are letters from McWard to Brown,² written in a concealed style which, declares Dr. McCrie "evidently refer to the above-mentioned transaction." But he adds, "who were the leading men in Scotland, in whose names this correspondence with Holland was carried on, or by what means they expected to get possession of the forts alluded to, I have not been able to discover."³

The Pentland Rising it seems clear arose from a local scuffle in Galloway which proved the flash to the tinder-dry

-
1. McCrie's Memoirs of Veitch & Bryson. p.379.
 2. " " " " " " p.379.
 3. " " " " " " p.379.

exasperation of the oppressed people. Brown would have his first news of it only when reports of the Rising, its failure and the cruel suppression of it, came across the North Sea. But that he was tremendously moved by this word is clear from a letter sent home after the Rising and called "Testimony after Pentland."¹

Brown had received a detailed account of all that took place and he speaks with impassioned words as though he had been himself present. Certain points are noteworthy in this Testimony.

He confesses that comparatively few had rallied to the banner of the Covenant. The country as a whole was slow to see the issues involved and to realise the justice of the Covenanting cause.

He laments the lack of violence towards Royalist prisoners who fell into their hands. There may well be reluctance in our minds to admit such an attitude in this minister of the Gospel, but there is certainly no uncertainty in the words with which Brown makes this extreme position clear. He laments "our not executing vengeance on those, when it was in our power to do it, who had troubled Israel so much."

He bewails "these ensnaring bonds tending to our renting and dividing." Some to escape from punishment had taken "unlawful bonds." Brown condemns the bonds, but calls the fallen brethren, "our dear brethren." He concludes, "We commend

1. Wodrow's M.S.S. Folio. 60. No. 44.

to your hearts, the cause and cross of Jesus Christ.

So in this first period of the Covenanted struggle Brown with the appearance of the "Apologeticall Relation" emerged as a leader of the movement, as one who counted it his task to clarify the principles for which he and so many others had suffered the loss of all things, and to inspire and encourage those of his brethren who endured and suffered at home.

II The Period of the Indulgences.

A change of emphasis in the Government's policy followed the suppression of the Pentland Rising. Hume Brown speaks of "the severities that followed the Rising as one of the blackest chapters in the national history."¹ The severities practised on the prisoners taken at Rullion Green not only tended to discredit the Government, but to drive multitudes into sympathy with the Covenanted Party. The conscience of the country was stirred. Men began to consider the issues involved. We have seen Brown's confession that few had sympathised with the Pentland Rising. Loyalist feeling brought to a peak by the Restoration had died hard. Though three hundred ministers had refused to accept the reconstruction of the Church, they were still a decisive minority of churchmen, and field preaching in this early period had been almost entirely confined to the south-western shires.

1. Hume Brown's History of Scotland. Vol. II. p.397.

But from 1667 onwards things began to change. A growing realisation of the vital issues involved (in which Brown's first book had played no small part) a growing revulsion against the absolutism and cruel methods of the government, together brought a steady increase in the numbers of conventicles and of those who attended them. By the seventies conventicles were being held in practically every lowland county, in Perthshire and Dunbartonshire and on the borders of the Highlands.¹

The Earl of Lauderdale in 1667 had taken over personal control of Scottish affairs and with new advisers embarked on a new policy which was flaunted as conciliatory and moderate, though indeed it was a double-edged policy. There was to be relief for ousted ministers who would compromise and extermination for those who refused. On June 7, 1669 the First Letter of Indulgence was issued.² Ministers who had lived "peacably and orderly" were to be allowed to re-occupy their churches if they happened to be vacant. If not they might be posted to other churches. Indulged ministers who would accept collation from the bishops would be granted the stipend as of old. Ministers refusing would have only the glebe. All would be strictly confined to their own parishes. On the other hand all who continued to address or attend conventicles would be punished with the utmost severity of the law. Whatever may be said in favour of this Indulgence policy by moderately-minded men, there is no doubt that acceptance of the Indulgence meant the acceptance

1. Kirkton pp.284,364. Wodrow's History Vol. II. p.234.

2. Wodrow's History. Vol. II. p.130. Burnet's History,
Vol. I. p.496, p.507.

of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown. It was the realisation of this clear implication of the new policy which made all but forty-two of the ousted ministers stand fast. But it can be readily imagined that new difficulties to the Covenanting cause were engendered by this Indulgence policy. There was on the one hand the temptation to compromise, on the other the dread of more severe penalties for conventicle-keeping. A new feeling of discord was born in the church between those who accepted the Indulgence and the others who stood fast. The Indulgence period was a testing time for the Covenanters.

Against this background we must now set the work and activities of John Brown. He saw very clearly the dangers inherent in the new Government policy, and he set himself to do two things. First to clarify the principles involved (in the same fashion as the writing of the Relation) to show the "Rise, Conveyance, Progress and Acceptance of the Indulgence, together with a demonstration of the unlawfulness thereof;¹ and secondly to inspire and challenge and hearten those who must be strengthened to continue the struggle. Brown realised that from the Covenanting point of view, the Indulgence was a dangerous weapon in the Government's hands, to divide the Church and so weaken its will to resist. And he countered it with all the strength at his disposal.

We must look first at three letters written by Brown in

1. Brown's History of the Indulgence. Title page.

June-July 1668. Though written a year before the Indulgence they express Brown's feelings about the desperate need for the continuance of the Covenanting cause and are illustrative of the kind of inspiration which Brown gave to the Covenanters during the next ten years.

The first is addressed from Utrecht to the "Worthy and renowned patriots."¹ He extols first of all the glorious privilege of suffering even to the point of martyrdom for Jesus Christ. "Would you not look upon a scaffold," he asks, "as the most desirable bed of honour?" "It is a crown not fit for everyone's head, but prepared for the king's special favourites, for those whom the king delighteth to honour." He denies that there was real treason or rebellion in the Pentland Rising. - "You dare not say they died as fools die, you dare not spit on their ashes." He appeals for endurance for "ye have need of patience."

In the second² and third letters³ Brown addresses himself directly to those ministers who through fear of consequences were not as forward as they ought in preaching. In challenging and forceful words he reminds them of the duties of their office, of the titles they bear, of the noble example of saints and prophets and reformers in former times. He speaks of the desperate need of faithful preaching in Scotland, so that the land may not lapse into godlessness and posterity be impoverished.

1. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 12.
2. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 13.
3. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 14.

"What is it," he asks, "that scareth you from this work? Is it, fear of imprisonment, confinement or death? Have you so learned Christ as to leave your duty, because of a lion in the way? So stridently and in inspiring words he calls the Covenanting ministers of Scotland to stand fast to their duty.

In 1677 there was published a little book entitled "An Apology for or Vindication of the oppressed persecuted ministers and professors of the Presbyterian Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland." Though published anonymously it has been commonly attributed to Brown¹ and the matter dealt with and the style of writing both make this extremely likely.

He writes in his introduction,² "We look upon it as our indispensable duty, by clearing truths and practices (so much now condemned) to endeavour the prevention and recovery of all from the snares they are in danger of and engaged into: wherefore in all Christian sobriety and humility we crave leave to open our hearts and minds to all."

In seven chapters, vigorously written, Brown deals with the main points at issue in the Covenanting struggle. He defends the Covenanters' reaction to the imposition of prelacy, their conventicles, their refusal of the Indulgence. In one chapter of particular importance he sets out a statement of his views on Church government, as being distinct from and independent of magistracy. "The truth is," he declares, "we look upon the supremacy ecclesiastical as an high conception in itself

-
1. Treasury of the Scottish Covenant. p.339. "The Covenanters, J.K. Hewison, Vol. II p.161. Religious Life in 17th C. Scotland G.D. Henderson. p.279.
 2. Vindication. Introduction. p.3.

tending to the subversion of the Church's concerns, in doctrine, worship, and government. So it lies at the bottom of our non-conformity to the law in Church matters."¹

Towards the end of this period of the Indulgences, in 1678 Brown produced his "History of the Indulgence." In this book, with accustomed thoroughness he deals with the whole subject. In the first part he gives a detailed history of the Indulgence, its appearances, its terms, the response to it, the names of those ministers who accepted the Indulgence, and accompanying these details as one by one they are set down, a trenchant criticism of the Indulgence, "a demonstration of the unlawfulness thereof." In the second part Brown sets down systematically his "Reasons against the Indulgence," a passionate defence of Presbyterianism, a vehement protest against all "who by Eriastianism or Absolutism would be injurious to Christ, as Head of the Church."

Between the writings of these letters and the publishing of the "Vindication" and the "History" which had immediate reference to the situation at home in Scotland, must be set other events and activities of this period.

In 1670 there was published in Rotterdam a volume in Latin, containing "Libri Duo, contra Woltzogenium et Velthusium." In the first of these 'Libri' he replies to the work of Woltzogenius a Rationalist, and maintains that reason cannot be exalted to the place of God, and in particular is not to be accepted as the standard of interpreting Scripture. Under the

1. Vindication. p. 130.

guidance of the Holy Spirit, Scripture is its own best interpreter. In the second book "contra Velthusium", Brown confutes a book by an Erastian, and in doing so sets out in thirty-two assertions his own conception of the Church Visible and Invisible.

In 1674-76 there was published the book which may be regarded theologically as Brown's Magnum Opus. It is entitled "De Causa Dei contra Antisabbatarios Tractatus" and is a massive work in two volumes, written in Latin. Writes Dr. James Walker, "De Causa belongs among books to the order of the mightiest: it is great in length, great in learning, great in patient sifting of the subject, and in meeting of assertions and marshalling of arguments."¹ His main task is the establishment of a full and comprehensive doctrine of the Sabbath, but it is long before he settles down to this. In the first book of the six into which the whole work is divided he deals "De Regibus Divinis" and speaks at great length on natural law, moral law, ceremonial law and kindred subjects. In the second book "De Cultu ac Tempore Solemne" he deals with questions arising out of divine worship, the setting apart and hallowing of places and times. In the third book he speaks "De Sabbati Natura et Origine," deals with the institution, nature, history of the Sabbath and its observance and argues that the keeping of the Sabbath as a holy day is part of the moral law and so obligatory always on all men. In Book 4, in the second volume

1. Scottish Theology and Theologians. J. Walker. p.23.

he speaks "De Decalogo" and deals in particular with the fourth commandment. In the fifth book he turns to the Christian conception of the Lord's Day and writes "De Diei Domini Institutione." He contends that this day of our Lord's appointing now bears the moral obligation that once belonged to the seventh day under the Old Testament economy. In the sixth and last book entitled "De Sanctificatione Diei Dominici," he deals with the practical questions that arise as to the correct keeping of the Lord's day.

With these main questions in view, Brown ever and again is turning aside to deal with cognate subjects, to answer objections and to defeat the contentions of those whose doctrines had led him to write the book, the "Anti-Sabbatarios."

Dr. Walker uses a very fitting metaphor to describe Brown's method in writing.¹ "Beginning from a far distance, like a captain attacking a strong fortress manned by the most powerful guns, he toils slowly and steadily forwards, in a sort of zigzag way, withal overlooking no advantage, seizing and fortifying every point, that he may deliver his assault with success."

To complete the total of Brown's published writings in this period we must notice the title book "Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life," published 1676. The various chapters, based it would seem on sermons or lectures of the author, deal very fully

1. J. Walker "Scottish Theology and Theologians. p.23.

with the truths of the text. We are told by Steven that this and the other works of John Brown were very popular with the Dutch who had editions of them prepared before they were published in English.

Certain of the writings of John Brown published posthumously, may be attributed to this period of his life.

Four of these books are like "The Way, The Truth and The Life," obviously based on sermons and lectures. "Christ in Believers the Hope of Glory," published in Edinburgh 1703, is an elaborately detailed study of Colossians 1, 27. Rev. J. Macdonald of Islington who supplied an introductory sketch to the little book, has this to say, "The following sheets are only some notes of sermons preached in the time of the author's trouble at Utrecht, for the most part in his own chamber: which after his death came to the hand of the Rev. James Koolman minister of the gospel at Sluis in Flanders, and by him were published in Dutch, as an appendix to the Dutch translation of the author's book entitled, "Christ the Way, The Truth and the Life" and are now only translated out of the Dutch ... they were diligently compared with the Dutch translation and committed to the press, the original not being extant."

In 1745 there was published in Glasgow "A Pious and Elaborate Treatise concerning Prayer and the Answer of Prayer." The

publishers write of it being "procured in Holland and brought home."¹ It consists of lectures based on John 14, 13 and in the author's painstaking and detailed manner discusses many aspects of prayer, the nature of prayer, difficulties in the way, sinfulness of neglect, family-worship, answers to prayer. Through the wordiness of it there shines a glow of warm piety and the evidence of a life of deep personal devotion.

In Glasgow in 1793 there was published "A Mirror, or Looking-Glass for Saint and Sinner - the Important Doctrines of the Law and Gospel opened up in a practical essay." The text used as basis for the essay is Galatians 3, 19, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." With a tremendous lavishness of amplification Brown makes manifest the failure of the law to redeem man from sin, and the glory of justification through faith in Christ. Howie of Lochgoin in a preface writes, "This amongst others of his last remains in manuscript, has undergone a very remarkable providence as to its particular discovery when on the very eve of inevitable wreck."

In 1771 there was published in Glasgow, a volume entitled "Enoch's Testimony opened up, in a Practical Treatise upon Hebrews XI, 5,6, wherein the Nature, Necessity, Utility and Rarity of Saving Faith is discovered." An interesting note is

1. Treatise on Prayer. Preface by Rev. R. Burns.

supplied by the publisher which amplifies Howie's statement given above. "A special divine providence is observable both in the preservation and discovery of this and several other manuscripts." (He mentions the discourse on Galatians 2, 19 in particular) "These, pretty clean and very distinct, probably had been in the custody of some old gentleman or minister, at whose decease they were unobservedly sold as waste paper to a snuff shop where being seen by a gentleman about twenty years ago they were purchased by him, from whom Robert Smith Bookseller in Glasgow procured them."¹

Two more substantial volumes may also be set in this period.

The first of these is the "Life of Justification Opened," published in 1695. Walker describes the volume as "not distinguished for brevity" but acknowledges that it is by far "our most thorough exposition and discussion of the doctrine it handles."² Through more than five hundred closely written pages Brown pursues his subject, painstakingly clearing away all false ideas about justification, setting out the true doctrine, and describing the implications of it and the demands of it in the life of the believer.

The Second of these works is "An Exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, with large practical observations," published in Edinburgh, 1766. "It appears," writes the publisher, "that the author designed the following lectures for the

1. Enoch's Testimony Preface p.IV.

2. Walker - Scottish Theology and Theologians. p.22.

press, on account of the correctness and completeness of the manuscript; so that unless it be the prefixing of title, preface and introduction it has stood in need of no other help either by adding or impairing."¹ Brown follows the method of the expositors of his time. He first sets out an exposition of each chapter, verse by verse and follows the exposition with notes of doctrinal and practical value. Spurgeon said of the commentary that it was "heavy perhaps but precious."² Heavy it certainly does prove. Out of each verse Brown draws every doctrine to which it appears relevant, and since he follows this practice throughout every chapter there is a tremendous deal of repetition. The orthodox positions of the faith are painstakingly set down, but it cannot be said the work shows very much of the originality or freshness that makes Leighton's Commentary on 1st Peter so much alive still.

From the Consistory Register of the Scots Church in Rotterdam we have an interesting piece of information concerning the year 1675. Because of the increased numbers of Scots who were by that time living in Rotterdam, many of them exiles like Brown, the Consistory appealed to the States of Holland and the magistrates of Rotterdam for an additional minister to be appointed as junior colleague to the Rev. John Hoog. "The individuals whose qualifications in a religious and literary point of view appear to have attracted most attention were Messrs. John Carstares and Robert McWard who have been respectively ministers

1. Epistle to the Romans. Preface.
2. Treasury of the Scottish Covenant. p.341.

in the Inner and Outer Churches of Glasgow and Mr. John Brown. Though the name of the first was put on the nomination list, Mr. Carstares had a little before sailed for Britain: so that it was at length resolved by the electors to confine their attention to the other two. Both candidates being men of tried and acknowledged worth and ability, found most strenuous supporters in the Consistory. The result shortly brought in Mr. McWard as the successful favourite, six having voted for him and three for Mr. Brown."¹ Mr. McWard accordingly was inducted as collegiate minister of the Church on 23rd January, 1676.

Had Brown been elected there would have been necessary a change in his way of life and work, but with the election passed, Brown returned to his activities as student and writer, giving help as we have already seen to the ministers, preaching from time to time in their pulpit, giving assistance in private meeting and in pastoral visitation.

It is clear from the above account that Wodrow the historian is wrong in representing Brown as one of the stated clergymen of the Scots Church at Rotterdam. The title is given to him in several of his books published posthumously and various historians following Wodrow have repeated the mistake.

Till now Brown had lived out his quiet days without any threat of danger from the King whose claims to absolutism had brought about his exile. But in 1676 the royal hostility followed him to his place of banishment.

1. Steven. History of the Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.25.

On 27th June 1676 Charles II wrote to the States General of Holland, requiring them in accordance with the treaties that bound the two countries, to banish from their territories Rev. Robert McWard and Rev. John Brown, with Colonel Wallace who had led the rebels of 1666, had now settled in Rotterdam and established a firm friendship with the two ministers.¹ Brown supplied to the States General a paper of information concerning himself² "Informatio de statu et conditione Joannis Brown" in which he denies that he or his colleague was ever convicted of treason. He suggests that the instigation of the King's letter had come from one Henry Wilkie who was displeased that so many Scots brought their ships to Rotterdam, to enjoy the ministry of the exiles, rather than to Campvere where Wilkie's factory was established. Brown suggests that the States General ask the English ambassador to produce a copy of the sentences pronounced upon McWard and himself so that it might be clear the articles of the Anglo-Dutch Treaty to which Charles had appealed did not apply to them.³

The States General were satisfied that the cause did not come under the Treaty and their ambassador to the English court made this representation to the King. But Charles' hostility was not so easily to be turned aside. Instead of the matter being dropped it was pressed with the utmost vigour.

-
1. McCrie's Memoirs of Veitch and Bryson. p.179
 2. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio. 60 No. 64.
 3. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio. 60 No. 64.

The English Ambassador, Sir William Temple left Nimwegen, though employed on important work and came to the Hague to bring the matter to a conclusion.¹

The States General were still convinced of the injustice of the King's demand, but in face of his persistence thought it prudent to yield. They did not do so however without expressing their sense of injustice of the demand. In a letter to the king sent on 22nd January 1677 they made this clear,² and in a resolution of their own, set down on 6th February 1677, they declare, "It is found good hereby to declare that although the aforesaid three Scotsmen have not only not behaved and comported themselves other than as became good and faithful citizens of these States, but have also given many indubitable proofs of that zeal and affection for the advancement of the truth, which their High Mightinesses have seen with pleasure, and could have wished that they could have continued to live here in peace and security."³

Sir William Temple the English ambassador bears witness also to the reluctance of the Dutch government to accede to the unjust demand. He calls it, "the hardest piece of negotiation that I ever yet entered upon here."⁴

When at last word was given to Brown and his two fellow-countrymen that they must leave Rotterdam, there was given to each a recommendation from the Dutch government, "instruments ad

1. Wodrow's M.S.S. Folio. 60. No. 75,77.

2. Wodrow's M.S.S. Folio. 60. No. 78.

3. Wodrow's M.S.S. Folio. 60. No. 81.

4. Sir Williams Temple's Letters. Vol. III. pp.291,292.

omnes populos" certifying that he had "lived among us highly esteemed for his probity, submission to the laws, and integrity of manners," requesting that the authorities in any state he entered might receive him graciously.¹

A full meeting of the Consistory of the Scots Church received the enforced decision of the States General on 1st February, 1677, "At which the session being very much grieved, thereby to be deprived of their faithful, painful and pious teacher, and of such another also, who every Lord's Day was an helper in the work of the Lord."²

On 4th February it was appointed that a congregational fast be kept on Thursday 11th instant. On Sunday 14th February a season of Communion was observed. Mr. Hoog preached in the morning, Mr. Brown was appointed to preach in the evening but was prevented by sickness.³

It appears that on medical grounds, his physician attesting that his health would be endangered by removal from the country, Brown was permitted to take up residence in Utrecht.⁴ Indeed it is probable that McWard went no further either. Colonel Wallace who was more obnoxious to the king, as having been in arms against him, judged it wise to repair for a time to the borders of France.

The banishment from Rotterdam was not a lengthy one. By 1678 all three were back in the town, as mentions in the session

-
1. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 60, No. 81.
 2. Steven History of Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.45.
 3. Steven History of Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.48.
 4. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio. 60. No. 65.

record makes clear. It seems however that they lived in retirement, taking no active part in the affairs of the Church. It is perhaps in this latest period of Brown's life that we must set those private meetings held for Bible Study and prayer in the house of Mr. Russell an elder of the church. "At these holy convocations, well calculated to promote personal and family religion, the spiritual welfare of the Scottish congregation was specially enquired into, and the preparatory steps taken for its melioration; the most recent intelligence was also communicated concerning the real condition of the Church and State of Scotland. While health permitted Messrs. McWard and Brown were of this little party."¹

So during this "period of the Indulgences" Brown continued, though an aging man, to play his part as one of the great inspirers of the Covenanting movement. In his books "The History of the Indulgence" and the "Vindication" he laid bare the principles for which the persecuted were contending and made clear how unlawful were these things the government would force upon them. In his letter he brought these principles down to the level of the ministers who would fain be true to them amidst the temptations and trials, the conflict of issues that for ever surrounded them. Kept continually in touch with events at home, Brown in the quiet of his Dutch study, brought forth with tremendous clarity the principles involved,

1. Steven. History of Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.67.

and in powerful, moving language commended them to the faithful remnant of Covenanted Presbytery.

In addition, this period makes clear Brown's claim to be the greatest theological writer of the later Covenanting age. His massive work on the Sabbath establishes his authority on that issue, never so fully dealt with, and his work on the Church, in the second book of "Libri Duo" while reflecting the thought of Gillespie and Rutherford has an independent value, and takes its place equally with "Aaron's Rod" and "The Divine Right of Church Government."

With the publication of "Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life," it was revealed too that this clear-minded thinker on Church government, this capable and careful theologian, this earnest and fierce controversialist could be a preacher and devotional writer of power and deep spirituality.

III Third Period.

But now we have come to the threshold of the third period of the Covenanting struggle which might be termed the period of active resistance.

While it is this period which is perhaps best remembered by the people at large, historically memorable by such striking events as the assassination of Archbishop Sharpe, the skirmish at Drumclog and the Battle of Bothwell Bridge, given an abiding place in literature by Scott's "Old Mortality" it still

must be kept clearly in mind that for the greater part of its story from 1660-88 and for the greater proportion of those within it, the Covenanting movement offered only passive resistance to the tyrannical demands of the Royal absolutism and the fierce oppression which accompanied these demands. It is a notable fact that for more than ten years following the Restoration, apart from the Pentland Rising which had been the flashing-out of a local exasperation, there was no readiness to resort to arms. The Covenanters of the South-West, and as the years passed on, Presbyterians all over the Lowlands endured the bitter oppression that was so cruelly meted out to them with a steadfast patience which is at least as gallant as the armed resistance eventually made.

In 1670 we are told for the first time that weapons of defence were carried by worshippers at the famous conventicle at Hill of Beath,¹ and the custom became more and more prevalent. The patience of men was being exhausted, it was becoming more and more difficult to bear without retaliation the cruelties inflicted on them.

In this period Brown's influence on the Covenanting movement was very strong indeed. True, he died in 1679 at the beginning of this period of active resistance, but the inspiration of his thought and words carried beyond death.

1. McPherson. Covenanters under Persecution. p.32.

We have seen that as early as 1665 Brown had justified "defensive war."¹ "The people" he had declared, "may and are bound before God to defend themselves when their religion (which ought to be dearer to them than anything else) is sought to be taken away or altered, and service books or mass books or the like, tyrannically obtruded upon them." It had been this clearly argued principle which most of all had made the "Apologeticall Relation" so obnoxious to the Government, and the book had not been laid aside nor its contention forgotten by the Covenanters.

The Government's oppressive measures had been becoming ever more stringent and severe. A narrow and closely-cribbed freedom for the Indulged who would compromise, stark oppression for all who stood steadfast by their Presbyterian faith and the hearing of the ousted ministers. Statute upon Statute was passed to force the recalcitrant to fall into line. The Privy Council worked hard at the seeking out and punishment of those who stood fast. "The noisome jails were emptied to be filled again with prisoners, caught at the ever increasing conventicles and left in the cells without being charged till health gave way."² "Consignments of men, women and boys were kept waiting their turn to be shipped to the East Indies to be sold as slaves."³

-
1. Apologeticall Relation. Section XI. p.33.
 2. J.K. Hewison. "The Covenanters." Vo. II. p.275.
 3. Fountainhall, Historical Notes. 1. p.204.

Mackenzie taking office as Lord Advocate in 1677 "found the jails full of wretches whom Nisbet (his predecessor) had left in chains because he had neither been bribed to prosecute them, nor bribed to release them."¹ So the miserable story might be continued, fining, imprisonment, abuse, torture. When in 1678 a plan was adopted to raise companies of dragoons to be stationed in the south and west, "whose constant employment may be for dissipating and interrupting those rendez-vous of rebellion,"² and whose officers were to be men like Graham of Claverhouse and Grierson of Lag, even the most patient of the Covenanters were becoming weary of merely passive resistance. Skirmishes with the military developed during conventicles at Whitekirk, Lilliesleaf, and other places. It was reported from Galloway, "many a man in Galloway if he hath but two cows will sell one cow for a pair of pistols."

Still the leaders of the Covenanting movement searched their hearts anxiously and their Bibles diligently. Was resistance justified? If so, was the royal authority to be disowned completely? What attitude was to be taken towards those Presbyterian ministers who had accepted the Indulgences? Were they to be severed from fellowship with the faithful? Throughout the seventies such questions fiercely agitated the minds of men.

The successful skirmish at Drumclog, the feverish excitement of the country at the news of Sharpe's murder, swept these

1. Omond, "The Lord Advocates" . Vol. I. p.213.
2. "Dundee" by Barbe. p.21.

questions aside. As the victors marched north "the country was flocking to them from all hands".¹ Between five and eight thousand armed men gathered to make common cause, though divided still among themselves, against the royal army. But once the dust had settled down upon the tragic battlefield and the rebellion had collapsed certain issues became clearer. The moderate party was practically eliminated. Some fled the country. Others gave up the struggle in despair. "By concession and repression the once mighty force of Scottish Presbyterianism had at length been broken."² Resistance was left to those whose attitude was clear and definite, extreme perhaps but strong to stand in such a time as this. From Bothwell onwards the direction of the Covenanting movement fell into the hands of the Cameronian party, which drew its inspiration from the exiled Brown and his companion McWard.

We have several letters of Brown which illustrate the part he played at this critical time.

On October 7, 1678³ he wrote to the Rev. John Dickson. He begins by lamenting the fact that some of the Presbyterian ministers who had formerly stood faithful now are feeling tempted to accept the Indulgence, that Indulgence "Which to me ever was and yet is, the bane of our cause." How can it ever be accepted, he asks, or the royal supremacy acknowledged, that supremacy, "the like whereof was never heard in any Christian Church, no, not in the Church of Rome, where Antichrist sitteth?" He will not agree that indulged ministers can be

-
1. Claverhouse's Despatch to Earl of Linlithgow. Dundee, by Barbe.
 2. Hume Brown's History of Scotland. Vol. II. p.414 p.47.
 3. Wodrow. MSS. Folio. 59. No. 90.

owned as the ambassadors of Christ. Thoughts of honour and charitableness he will give to them as men but since they "depend, as to the actual exercise of their ministerial function on such immediately as we have never entrusted with church power, receiving injunctions, limitations, license and authority, not interpretatively, but expressly and in terminis from them and so acting under magistrates in a subordination, as direct and formal as inferior civil courts," they cannot be acknowledged and received as "ambassadors for Christ." To accept the Indulgence is to become part of the whole monstrous instrument of tyranny which is being used to crush out the life of the faithful remnant. He asks in conclusion for a full report of the field-meetings.

Under the same date, October 7, 1678¹ Brown wrote to the Rev. John Welsh a faithful Covenanter though a man of moderate feelings. His main reason for writing is to rebuke Welsh for refusing to preach against the Indulgence, "that piece of defection." "It is good to be found about duty," he writes, "and not shifting it in this day, especially when it is the casus confessionis of the day, whether Christ be sole head and king of His Church or not." "To refuse a testimony to this truth, were it but indirectly, is dangerous."

He speaks also in this letter of the great spiritual blessings which have been given at the conventicles. "Since the apostles' days, I doubt if men ever had more encouragement and more live and real testimonies of God's approbation of their

1. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 90.

way and manner of preaching in that rich blessing of conviction, conversion and establishment."

A third letter was written on the same day to Mr. Richard Cameron,¹ who at this time, though not yet ordained, was rapidly becoming known as of extreme views with regard to the Indulgence, the right of resistance and the like. Brown had as yet no personal acquaintance with Cameron, but had heard glowing reports of his work. He had heard with poignant interest of Cameron's preaching, his "holding up the banner in dead and desolate Annandale, among the rest in and among that people of Wamphray Parish, where alas I did little or no good." Brown sympathises with Cameron in the opposition he had stirred up by preaching against the Indulgence, "the evil that God's soul hateth." "I bless the Lord," he declares, "that helped you to stand in the day of trial." As he closes his letter he pleads that if it may be Cameron will again visit Annandale, that his own former countryside may be blessed.

Still on the same date, a letter was directed to Mr. Thomas Hog, Younger.² Hog had determined to follow in his father's calling as a preacher of the Gospel, and Brown was "refreshed" to have this word.

He laments again the Indulgence, the divisions it has made in the Church and in particular bewails the fact that even among the non-Indulged there had been divisions of opinion, caused by this Indulgence. How were faithful men to behave

1. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 90.

2. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 93.

towards those who had accepted the Indulgences? Brown is quite clear in his answer. The faithful must as Christian men "lament their case, pray for them," but there can be no uniting with them. "There is no union but in truth." Brown considers acceptance of the Indulgence to be a deadly sin. "For at the long run it cometh to this, to deny Christ to be sole King and Head of His Church. O what part of the Gospel shall be a seasonable matter of our sermons this day, if this concerning Christ's kingly office and power be laid aside."

On 6th March 1679 Brown wrote the final letter which has survived, addressing it again to Rev. John Dickson.¹ He is concerned about a meeting of ministers which had censured Richard Cameron for the vehemence of his preaching against the Indulged. He denies first that "a company of presbyters occasionally met together ... are an empowered court of Christ to exercise acts of jurisdiction. It seems shameful to him that one like Cameron should be made the subject of censure while no word is spoken against the Indulged. O the Indulgence, "the most hurtful and dangerous piece of defection." He finishes with the words, "Press the people to a quick closing with Christ."

Early in 1679 Richard Cameron himself came to Holland.² "His implacable enmity with Erastianism, even in its compromise between the ousted and the indulged ministry,"³ had made him unpopular with the older and moderately inclined nonconformists.

1. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio 59. No. 93.

2. "Cameron" Biographia Presbyteriana. Patrick Walker. Vol. I. p. 195.

3. J.K. Hewison. "The Covenanters." Vol. II. p. 291.

He resolved to seek ordination from the exiled ministers and so made his way to Rotterdam. Brown, as the last letter quoted made clear, saw in Cameron one of like convictions to his own. It had been claimed in Scotland that he was incapable of preaching anything but fierce denunciations of the Indulgence and the Indulged, but Brown and McWard found it was not so. His sermons on Matthew 12,28 were greatly appreciated by all who heard them.¹ McWard declared, writing to a friend, that certain had said of Cameron's preaching - "they had not heard such a gospel-preaching since Mr. Brown's banishment."² The exiled ministers were heartily willing to ordain the young enthusiast. In order to constitute a Presbytery they called in a Dutchman, James Koelman,³ ejected from his own church at Sluis in Flanders for refusing to observe the festival days and formularies of the Dutch Church. The ordination took place in the old Scots Church Rotterdam. Before the ordination Brown preached on Jeremiah 2,35, "Behold I will plead with thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned. Because I am innocent surely his anger shall turn from me." The three ministers ordained Cameron by the laying on of their hands. The prayer of consecration was made, Brown and Koelman removed their hands but McWard continued still to touch Cameron's head, crying, "Behold all ye beholders, here is the head of a faithful minister and servant of Jesus Christ, who shall lose the same for his Master's interest, and shall be set up before sun and moon in the public view of the world."⁴

1. Biographia Presbyteriana. Patrick Walker. Vol. I. p.195.

2. McWard, "Earnest Contendings". p.156.

3. Steven's History of Scottish Church in Rotterdam. p.72. Note

4. Six Saints of the Covenant. p.225. 235-6.

In 1679 there appeared from Brown's pen the book "The Life of Faith in Times of Trouble" and the pamphlet "The Banders Disbanded." The second part of "The Life of Faith" called "Swan-Song" was published in 1680 just after his death. These give further manifestation of Brown's feeling and activities during the third period of the Covenanting struggle.

The "Banders Disbanded" is written in the form of a letter, its theme, "the bond tendered by the Council of Scotland to some Presbyteries there in the year 1679."

A meeting of certain ministers in Edinburgh had decided that there was "no reason why people might not give security for a minister's peaceable behaviour." Brown argues against the validity and rightness of this decision. He lays down as his basic principles: that "presbyterian government is a government specifically distinct from and independent of the civil government, neither to be confounded therewith nor subordinate thereto either in the power or exercise of the power." Further that "this government is not monarchical save only in the Head, Christ; not hierarchical, or prelatical; not democratical, not magistratical, but ministerial. From these basic general principles he shows that the bond with its implications of an invalid subordination of the church is "sinful, scandalous and inconvenient."

In the "Life of Faith" and its second part "Swan-Song"

Brown addresses himself directly to the comforting and strengthening of those who endure persecution for the sake of covenanted Presbytery, which is to him equivalent with the cause of Christ. He speaks of the life of the Christian as being a life of faith. He shows that such a life is sufficient for a time of trouble. He deals with the assurances of God's presence and Christ's sympathy with those who suffer for righteousness' sake. From the promises of God and the experiences of former saints he gives hope of deliverance.

In the Swan-Song, he is concerned to show that always God is supreme, the suffering of the righteous has a place in His commanding will. He pleads that Christ Himself was a man of sufferings, that human pains are nothing to His. The gift of suffering in a Christian manner is of God's giving and must be sought from him. God is always supreme and will work out deliverance in His own good time.

The year 1679 was a trying year for John Brown, for the news from Scotland was sad news and his own health was failing rapidly. By mid-summer news of Bothwell Bridge was carried to Holland. At last the Covenanters had been goaded into that armed resistance Brown had so long defended, but by their own divisions as much as by the force of the enemy, their cause was laid in ruins. The scaffold in the Grassmarket was in constant use. Claverhouse's Dragoons swept cruelly over the South-West. Bitter news indeed for the exiles. But not sufficient, it is clear, to destroy their hopes or their defiant courage. With

the shadow of death upon him Brown took his part in the ordination of Richard Cameron and sent him home to Scotland to continue the struggle.

In September 1679 John Brown died and was buried in the land of his exile. His possessions, some money, a few books were, in his familiar conscientious manner passed on to others, his own kinsfolk in Scotland being specially remembered and the poor of the Scots congregation in Rotterdam benefiting by the gift of 100 guilders.¹

McWard wrote² to a friend about the loss Brown's death brought to himself and to the cause of Covenanted Presbytery. "I must tell you, during all the spare time we were together, I observed him (his chamber being just above mine) to be as much in prayer and communion with God as ever I observed any ... There is no minister now alive in the Church of Scotland, in the same class with him, for abilities, fixedness, and pure zeal according to knowledge ... I look upon his removal in our present circumstances, as a greater stroke upon the Church of Scotland than the removal of any now alive in it could have been, by many degrees."

1. Brown's Will. Wodrow. M.S.S. Folio 60. No. 90.
2. Wodrow. M.S.S. Folio 58. No. 103.

PART II

HIS THOUGHT.

"Brown of Wamphray was without doubt, the most important theologian of this period."

Jas. Walker of Carnwath.

CHAPTER I.
CONCERNING SCRIPTURE.

In considering the theological ideas of John Brown it is necessary to begin with his doctrine concerning Scripture, upon which all his other religious ideas were founded.

The doctrine of Scripture as a definite law-code, inspired and infallible was indeed the corner-stone of the whole structure of later Calvinism and "orthodox Brown"¹ was nowhere truer to his name than in this respect. His knowledge of Scripture is manifestly tremendous and he declares it to be the sole foundation for every doctrine he proclaims.

The Scriptures are to Brown the undoubted Word of God.

"They contain nothing but a revelation of the will and good pleasure of God."² That word which was given by immediate divine inspiration cannot but bear the name of the Word of God." "The Scriptures are holy as having a holy God for their author and breathing out nothing but holiness; and therefore should be looked on and used in all reverence, and therefore they are called the Holy Scriptures."³ They are for Brown literally and infallibly inspired. "Holy men of God spoke as they were, not only determined, but moved by the Holy Ghost and that in contradistinction from the acts of men's fancy and imagination. The Holy Ghost did immediately and extraordinarily dictate what was written, matter and expressions, as well such things as they had seen, heard, read, studied and known before as these they were ignorant of or had forgotten."⁴ And so the whole and every part, sentence and word is of divine authority and of a divine original.⁵

This Scripture so divinely inspired was given not for one age but for all ages,⁶ and all Scripture is to be accepted and used

-
1. Howie "Scots Worthies. Preface p.XXVI.
 2. Quakerism. p.51.
 3. Romans. p.8.
 4. Quakerism. p.52.
 5. Quakerism. p.53.
 6. Romans. p.163.

as the Word of God.¹ Its canon is complete and perfect,² it can never be outgrown.³ The chronology of Scripture whereby we know at what period of time things fell out is useful and necessary and serves to clear useful truths.⁴ Furthermore, "so complete and full a canon is the Word and so perfect, that many consequences natively and clearly deduced therefrom are to be looked on as of everlasting truth and of divine authority, as well as what is set down in plain terms."⁵

All of this is true for the whole of Scripture, Old Testament as well as New. "Old Testament Scriptures, are yet in force to us under the Gospel, and may safely be made use of to confirm or illustrate truths."⁶

Scripture alone is to be rested on as the ground of our faith.⁷ No doctrine is to be accepted, believed or proclaimed unless it is warranted by the Word of God. Further, manners of living are to be judged by the standards of Scripture, "It is the rule whereby we ought to square our lives."⁸ Certainly for ministers and all preachers of the Gospel, no standard but the Word of God can be accepted, "nothing but what is consonant and agreeable thereto."⁹ Brown sums up this aspect of his belief in Scripture in the words "unica fidei ac morum norma."¹⁰ It is essential that all Christians should strive to increase their

-
1. Romans. p.356.
 2. Romans. p.358.
 3. Romans. p.358.
 4. Romans. p.144.
 5. Romans. p.531.
 6. Romans. p.132.
 7. Romans. p.332.
 8. Romans. p.499.
 9. Romans. p.435.
 10. Duo Libri Ek. I. p.45.

knowledge of Scripture and all ministers in particular should be well-read in the Word.¹

What does Brown have to say of the problems of interpreting Scripture?

He declares first of all that Scripture is "harmonious in all its parts, each corresponding with another, and no way jarring or contradicting really, whatsoever may appear through the shallowness of our capacities and apprehensions."²

Where controversies arise from various views of Scripture, there is no final peremptory visible judge on earth, but the Spirit of God speaking in the scriptures, is the only judge and by that Spirit only should the true genuine sense of the scriptures be found out: one place serveth thus to clear another and what is dark in one is cleared more fully in another place.³ Comparison of passages under the guidance of the Spirit will lead to deliverance from uncertainty.

Brown in a passage from his tract "Banders Disbanded" takes this question a little further⁴. He is discussing the words of our Lord, "Resist not evil." The terms of that prohibition he writes are "general, illimited, and indefinite." "But if you should answer here that though that particular passage of Scripture doth not characterise nor discriminate what sort of evil we are to resist and what not, yet many other parallel places do. Even so say I, that although one particular passage of Scripture

1. Romans. p.422. p.428.

2. Romans. p.436.

3. Romans. p.436.

4. Banders Disbanded. p.71-72.

may commend peaceable living in general, absolute and indefinite terms, yet other parallel scriptures do expressly qualify and restrict the same." "Though there were but one passage in the whole Scripture that either expressly mentions or so insinuates these qualifications and restrictions of peaceable living, as thereupon we have good ground to qualify and restrict the same, I say that even that one passage is to be the rule and standard by which all the rest, indefinitely so expressed, are to be interpreted and understood in reference to peaceable living, not contrariwise."

This is obviously an important principle for the interpretation of Scripture, especially when we remember that for Brown and his fellows the Old Testament and the New stood on the same footing. "One sentence of divine revelation should captivate our faith and judgment as well as twenty, otherwise all divine revelation will hereby at length come to be questioned".¹ "One testimony of Scripture is sufficient to confirm a point of truth, God always being the God of truth, and one who cannot lie".² A single word then in the Old Testament set down in particular reference to any question of faith or conduct was to be taken as more immediately to be accepted than general rulings given in the New Testament even by our Lord Himself. It is this principle expounded by Brown, more even than his extreme literalism which would seem to be his chief deficiency in the interpretation of Scripture. How completely out of touch with the true spirit of

1. Justification. Ch. 14. p. 202.
2. Romans 9, 27. (IV).

the Christian faith, that a word from the Mosaic Law concerning witchcraft or a passage from the historical books extolling the slaying of an enemy of God's people should be accepted as more authoritative than the general commandment of our Lord Himself. It is remarkable, as Dr. McPherson expresses it, considering the stress which was laid on the doctrine of the Headship of Christ over the Church, that the Headship of Christ over Scripture was not asserted."¹

Two further questions Brown discusses in his doctrine of Scripture, its relationship to the Holy Spirit and its relationship to reason.

We have quoted in passing Brown's expression, "The Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures"² and there is no doubt throughout Brown's writing that it is this fact that makes the Scriptures holy, infallible and authoritative. Again and again he uses this same expression. But it is on this very point that Brown and Barclay the Quaker came into controversy, as indeed orthodox theologians and Quakers generally were doing at this time. In what sense was the Scripture inspired by the Holy Spirit and what was the relationship between the two? Did the Bible give full revelation of the will of God, or were there necessary other and immediate revelations? Over against the Quaker doctrine that the Spirit revealed truth to men by direct revelation, Brown maintained the unique nature of the Word of God as giving complete revelation of His will and purpose^{to} men. He speaks of the "perfection of the Scriptures,"³ he

1. McPherson - "Covenanters under Persecution. p.63.

2. Above - p.90.

3. Quakerism. p.74.

calls the Word of God "a complete and perfect rule"¹ and he describes as "prodigious and blasphemous audacity,"² any suggestions of new prophecies or revelations.

Does this mean that Brown sets the written Word above the living Spirit of God? He denies it vehemently and refuses to accept that there can be any conflict between the two. It is the Spirit that speaks in and through the Word. To distinguish between the Holy Spirit and the Scripture as the principal and secondary authority of the revelation of God is absurd: as absurd as to argue whether a man or his words, a government or its laws be the primary source of authority.³ It is impossible to distinguish the inspiration of the Spirit from the inspiration of the Scripture which is His Word.

Brown fiercely combats those doctrines of Quakerism which would ascribe authority to direct and immediate revelations of the Spirit. He is bitterly suspicious of such beliefs. The work of the Spirit is not to bring new revelations, since the canon of Scripture is complete and perfect, but to open up that Scripture to the believer." We absolutely deny that the Spirit bringeth new revelations in matters of doctrine, worship and government: but only that He opens the eyes and enlightens the understanding, that we may perceive and rightly take up what is of old recorded by the same Spirit."⁴

Brown goes carefully into the Quaker doctrine expressed by Barclay's words, "that we know the certainty of the Scriptures

1. Quakerism. p.74.

2. Quakerism. p.75.

3. Quakerism. p.57.

4. Vindication of the Oppressed Presbyterian Ministers.
Intro. p.11.

only by the inward testimony of the Spirit." This may mean, either that we know the certainty of the matter contained in the Scriptures only by the inward testimony of the Spirit: or that only by the inward testimony of the Spirit do we know that the Scriptures are the Word of God. If Barclay's words are taken in the first then the result must plainly be a doctrinal chaos, for every man's "inner light" will be the sole determiner of what he shall accept. The Roman Catholics are condemned for giving to the Pope the lordship over Scripture, but "here every Quaker hath a Pope within his own breast".¹ If we take Barclay's words in the second sense, Brown maintains that they have little significance. For the Scriptures are or are not the Word of God and any subsequent testimony of the Spirit cannot make them so.

According to Brown the function of the Spirit is not to prove the truth of the Scripture, that is an objective fact, but to open men's minds to realise this. "He so illuminateth the mind to see the characters of divinity, as withal to work the assent or persuasion."² He sums up the difference between his own view and that of the Quakers concerning the function of the Spirit. "The Quakers' revelation is purely objective and new and immediate, declaring a new truth. The word of the Spirit which we speak of is a subjective conviction in the soul, and a persuasion of the truth which only the man did not see before."³

The fear which Brown shared with the orthodox of his time that the authority of the Bible might be undermined by the Quaker

1. Quakerism. p.60.
2. Quakerism. p.63.
3. Quakerism. p.64.

emphasis on the "inner light," made him regard the sect with tremendous aversion. He wrote of Quakerism as the "Pathway to Paganism." There is something of truth in Dr. MacPherson's words, though no doubt Brown would have denied it, that in Brown's theology "the range of the Spirit's activity was regarded as circumscribed."¹

Yet from the other flank Brown is attacked by Wolzogius as giving too much place in the interpretation of Scripture to the work of the Holy Spirit. Wolzogius considers him as among the "Enthusiastae," who instead of being rational in their approach to the Bible leave too much to the 'afflatus' of the Spirit. Brown refutes this accusation. "How far away we are" he declares,

"from that madness of those fanatics. We read the Word, we study it carefully, we meditate upon it. We magnify it which no fanatic would do. Any suggestions made within our spirit by the direct work of the Holy Ghost we do not accept at once as governing our activities. We examine them by Scripture ... What is contrary to the Word we reject as inspired by the Devil, only what is acceptable to the authority of the Word do we receive as right and good."²

The work of the Spirit is not to contradict or gainsay the Scripture, indeed not even to add to it. Scripture is the complete and perfect revelation of the will of God. In itself, objectively it is true and final. Yet the Spirit has His gracious part to play. It is his task to make the objective truth of Scripture applicable to the human heart.

"How often do believers feel themselves moved by the Spirit to do this or that good work set down in Scripture. How often does he recall to them many things forgotten by them. How often does he confirm the truth, writing it, engraving it upon their hearts."³

-
1. "Covenanters under Persecution". p.62.
 2. Duo Libri. Bk. 1. pp.111-112.
 3. Duo Libri. Bk. 1. p.106.

The second relationship of Scripture Brown deals with is its relationship to human reason, and this matter he discusses at length in the book from which we have already quoted; a work written to confute the rationalistic suggestions made by Wolzogius.

Wolzogius endeavours to give to human reason a far greater part in interpreting and accepting what is set down in the Bible than Brown is prepared to yield.

There is, he declares, a clarity in the Scriptures. They are objectively clear, that is clear in themselves, but because human reason has been dulled and spoiled by sin, that clarity is not always apparent to the reader. In other words when men cannot understand part of what is set down in the Bible, they are to blame not the obscurity of Scripture but the darkness of their own minds.¹ By the mercy of God those things essential to our salvation have been set down in a way which ought to be clear to all men.²

Brown distinguishes the understanding which may be had of Scripture by regenerate and unregenerate men. The latter can understand the Word only grammatically and historically. The regenerate man perceives and is moved by the spiritual truth of it, because he is using not merely reason but the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit.³ Without that aid no man can understand the Scripture savingly.⁴

-
- | | | | | |
|----|------------|-----|----|-------|
| 1. | Duo Libri. | Bk. | 1. | p.20. |
| 2. | " | " | 1. | p.23. |
| 3. | " | " | 1. | p.24. |
| 4. | " | " | 1. | p.25. |

Brown is willing to give human reason its own due place in the reading and interpreting of the Word of God. There is nothing in Scripture contrary to reason.¹ We are not to refuse "particular and subservient helps to the understanding of Scripture, the learning of the original tongues, the knowledge of historical and other background are all useful and profitable means of assistance."² But all that reason can achieve must be regarded as secondary and fallible, for man is a fallen creature, and his reasoning powers have been spoiled and corrupted by sin. It is foolish as well as blasphemous to set reason in the place of God.

Orthodox theologians speak of the uses of reason in the interpreting of Scripture as subjective, instrumental and normal. "In these we speak of Reason, first as the rational which apprehends, secondly as distinguishing, arguing etc. thirdly as judging according to its own will and opinion."³ Brown argues that reason has subjective and instrumental use, but cannot agree that reason be set up as the norm by which we should judge and interpret Scripture.⁴

Scripture is to be regarded as its own interpreter, or rather God speaking through the Scripture, which fact gives it authority and infallibility. Brown writes, "The norm of interpreting Scripture and of judging the interpreting of Holy Scripture, is Holy Scripture itself, which is the voice of God itself. Whatever interpretation agrees with Scripture, that is true and is of God: whatever disagrees is false and does not proceed from

1. Duo Libri. Bk. 1. p.49.
2. " " " 1. p.268
3. " " " 1. p.45.
4. " " " 1. p.45.

God." In clear passages He makes known His will to the faithful clearly, in more difficult passages, by the comparison of those passages with others more clear, His will is confirmed more and more."¹

It may be asked what we are to make of Bible passages where the word of Scripture seems to conflict with our human reason. Wolzogius had been quite definite in his reply. Reason is to consider such passages and to reject what seems contradictory. Brown will have none of this. He writes "Although there is no conflict between Scripture and sound reason: yet if there should seem to be such a conflict we ought to bring reason to the tribunal of Scripture rather than try to judge Scripture by reason. Reason must be reconciled to Scripture."² "This is not denying that there are certain parts of Scripture which may be illumined by the light of reason"³ But nevertheless the Word of God stands as the final revelation of God's will. We believe the truths of the faith, not because they depend on reason, but because they are revealed in Scripture.

Scripture is "the voice of God." Through it the Holy Spirit speaks. The supreme right of interpreting Scripture belongs to the Spirit Himself. Since however the Scriptures are so fully and finally and infallibly His Word, we may say that Scripture itself read under the Spirit's guidance is the infallible norm by which we must determine our interpretations.⁴

-
- | | | | | |
|----|------------|-----|----|------------|
| 1. | Duo Libri. | Bk. | 1. | p.46. |
| 2. | " | " | 1. | p.49. |
| 3. | " | " | 1. | p.268. |
| 4. | " | " | 1. | p.249-250. |

CHAPTER 2

CONCERNING THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

Behind all the variety of themes discussed by Brown in his various books the doctrine of the sovereignty of God stands like an unchanging background, making its influence felt on every other aspect of the faith. "The glory of the Reformed Church in the past lay undoubtedly in its doctrine of God,"¹ writes Professor Hastie, and this is certainly true of John Brown. Like all his other theological doctrines it was based directly on Scripture and Brown quotes extensively throughout his writings the majestic and glorious names that the men of the Scriptures apply to the Lord. Because Brown would like to think of Scotland as like Israel in olden times, a nation pledged to the Lord and bound to him by solemn covenant, he speaks often of God as the King - "believers have a King," he writes, "who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever and whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom."² The Presbyterian Church in its struggle with the Royal Erastianism strove with a steadfastness all the fiercer because it suspected that behind the bishops of King Charles stood the Pope of Rome: and so Brown, a son of his age, felt his need of God as a strong defence, almighty in power, resistless in his sovereignty. "The whole earth is His throne, and there He sitteth as King on His throne: and He is placed and fixed there by a sure and unchangeable decree."³ God is the

-
1. Hastie "Doctrine of the Reformed Church. p.45.
 2. Life of Faith. Vol. II. p.138.
 3. Life of Faith. Vol. II. p.140.

Lord Almighty, high and lifted up, absolute Master of all, ruling in indisputable majesty over His Church, over all men, over the whole of creation.

His creatures then have no claims upon God, no rights that they can insist on before Him. His rule over them in every aspect of it, His planning of their lives, His determining of their destiny in life and eternity are to be accepted as the will of God. There is no higher arbiter than that. Brown makes his position absolutely clear in one memorable passage, "In respect of God's sovereignty, and truly and in itself considered, God may do to His creatures whatsoever He wills. Without any, even the least kind of injury: for injury supposes some right or debt in the case of the person to whom the injury is done. But in the creature, viewed in his relation to God as his Creator and absolute Lord, no right, no due exists: therefore no injury here is possible. Wherefore, though he should inflict suffering on the creature, all undeserving, He would do him no injury: for where there is no 'jus', no 'injuria' can have any place. Cannot God if He will, annihilate His creatures? And if He can annihilate, can He not put them to death? And if He can put them to death, cannot He do this in a longer or a shorter time? And if He can do this, cannot He do it with some degree of pain; and if with some degree why not with a greater?"¹

Brown and others like him according to a theologian of last century were not "cold and heartless speculators". "They had learned to lose themselves so utterly before the glorious majesty of the

1. De Causa Dei. Vol. I. p.42.

eternal that they shrank from everything that had even the appearance of a right or a claim upon Him from the creature as destructive of His absolute independence, in fact, taking away His crown."¹

Of course there were mysteries in such a conception of God's sovereignty and Brown accepts this fact freely. He entitles one chapter in the "Life of Faith" - "No man can make straight what God hath made crooked." Throughout many of his books he recognises that there are bound to arise in the minds of men questions and doubts about the workings of God in Providence and Grace. His eternal decrees, the problem of evil in the world, the suffering of the godly, the freedom of man's will, and similar questions are difficult for the human mind to understand along with the thought of God's sovereignty. "Thus it appeareth how many things God hath made crooked to our apprehensions."²

Brown recognises that such questions do naturally arise in men's minds when considering the sovereignty of God, but he will in no wise encourage them. Such doubts proceed from the carnal nature of men's hearts and to cherish them is sin against God the sovereign Lord. His will is supreme and where we cannot understand, we must in humility accept. God is unchangeable and hath fixed all upon eternal and immutable purposes. He is almighty and who can jostle with Him and put Him to take new resolutions? He is absolute and sovereign, to overdo what He will as the

-
1. Walker: Scottish Theology and Theologians.
 2. Life of Faith. Vol. II. chp. XXI.

Potter is absolute over the clay. All His works are done in wisdom, are perfect and right. "There are depths and unseen mysteries in the work and ways of the Lord that we cannot search, and ignorance of which causeth the sinstruous apprehensions that we have of them. And how shall we think to amend that which we do not understand?"¹ He sums up the matter in a sentence, "God doth follow a transcendent path of supreme unlimited sovereignty."²

Brown deals particularly with the relationship of the sovereignty of God to certain important matters.

I The Sovereignty of God and the moral law.

In the first volume of his work "De Causa Dei contra anti-Sabbatarios", Brown has a long discourse on the question of law in general.

He maintains as his first great principle that all morality proceeds from the will of God. "All admit," he writes, "that certain of our actions are just and good because God in His will commanded them, and others unjust and evil because He forbade them."³ But Brown's contention is that all morality proceeds from God's sovereign will. Indeed there are some things which are at one time good at another time evil, because in varying circumstances the will of God has ordained now one thing, now another. He cites from Scripture the spoiling of the Egyptians and the command to Abraham to slay his son Isaac as illustrations of this point.⁴

1. Life of Faith. Vol. 2. p.244.

2. Romans Ch. 9. V. 14.

3. De Causa Dei. Vol. I. p.18.

4. I. p. 19.

"Actions", Brown declares, "are not commanded by God because they are good, they are good because they are commanded."¹

It is certain however, that God always commands what is good and forbids what is evil. He writes,

"It is certain that God, whatever He commands or forbids always commands what is good and forbids what is evil, and that by the necessity of nature He is good, wise and righteous; and He does nothing in commanding or forbidding but that which His own infinite wisdom declares to be good and right, indeed best and excellent. Yet it does not follow from this that whatever He orders or forbids is in itself, or by its own nature just or unjust, before the act of God's will."²

The will of God is the ultimate arbiter of all, but we must not divide His attributes. The will of God is not to be separated from His wisdom. God wills nothing but what He judges good.³

There are some, he acknowledges, who wish the first rule of all morality to be outwith God's active will, rather to be His essential purity and justice, so that morality would be conformity with the nature of God rather than the determination of His will. But this cannot be. God must always be sovereign expressing His will freely in each issue that arises. How indeed can we know the purity and justice of God unless these are revealed by His laws? And this, declares Brown, is a return to his own position. These essential qualities of God are not to be regarded as the norm but as the motive of our conduct.⁴

This law which proceeds from the sovereign will of God Brown divides into two great divisions - the natural law and the positive.

-
1. De Causa Dei. Vol. 1. p.21.
 2. " " " " 1. p.24.
 3. " " " " 1. p.33.
 4. " " " " 1. p.36.

law. The natural law is that which flows from the very nature of God. The positive law concerns those things which God may will or not will, where there may be different divine commands in different situations.¹

Natural law may be regarded in two directions, with respect to God Himself and with respect to his creatures. In the first class come those things which flow from the essential nature of God, the opposite of which would involve contradiction in God or be repugnant to his nature.² In the second section come those laws which God imposes upon His creatures. God implanted in man at his creation the knowledge of His commanding will. In the Fall that knowledge was tremendously blurred, largely destroyed, especially those parts of it which concerned things spiritual. Only with great difficulty can this natural law be laid bare afresh. What Adam in the state of innocence recognised perfectly and with ease, we have difficulty in seeing. Only by the sparks of the divine image remaining in us have we even our meagre knowledge of the natural law and of the spiritual very little indeed.³

But God by revelation through the Scripture makes clear to us again our natural duties. Scripture illuminated by the Holy Spirit contains the whole will of God for us.⁴

He defines this law of nature in these terms: "The law of nature is that manifestation of the Divine will by which a man is

-
1. De Causa Dei. Vol. 1. p.39.
 2. " " " " 1. p.45.
 3. " " " " 1. p.70. p.82.
 4. " " " " 1. p.86.

bound to do what is good, to avoid what is evil. This law is so expressed in the nature of things as established by God and related to Himself, that the human reason either on its own or by the aid of divine inspiration and revelation, can easily perceive it."¹ From the sovereign will of God, according to Brown, there flow the governing principles of all human activity, once clearly understood in the days before the Fall, now sadly blurred by sin, but revealed afresh by the Word of God.

How is this natural law to be related to what we call the moral law? Under the old Jewish economy God laid upon His people three types of law, ceremonial, judicial and moral.

The ceremonial laws were those by which God ordered the religious activities of His people in the Old Testament era.² From their very nature, they were obviously temporary, pointed forward as signs to Christ, and were cancelled when He brought in the new age of Grace. Before Christ they were useful for the cultivation of piety. After Christ's death and the promulgation of the Gospel they were dead and became fatal to those using them and depending upon them.

The judicial laws or forensic laws were those given by God for the rule of His people as a civil state.³ As ceremonial laws concern a man's ordering of himself with regard to God, so judicial laws have regard to the ordering of his life with respect to other men. Though these laws proceeded from the will of God

1. De Causa Dei. Vol. 1. p.86.
2. " " " " 1. p.96.
3. " " " " 1. p.103.

they were firstly and pre-eminently for Israel and it does not follow that they are right and proper for all nations. Many indeed of these judicial laws were so interwoven with the ceremonial laws that they passed away with them. Certain have moral background which makes them more abiding.

The moral law is that which expresses the will of God for men's manner of living, not for one era, as the ceremonial, nor primarily for one nation, as the judicial, but for all men at all times.¹

How is it related to the law of nature which has been discussed already?² All that is commanded or forbidden by natural law is likewise commanded or forbidden by the moral law. But the moral law must be more embracing. For instance the law of nature was known in its entirety to Adam in the Garden of Eden. But certain things not morally obligatory then, have become obligatory since, e.g. faith in Christ. Brown therefore defines the moral law in these terms:

"It is that expression of God's will which is given in Scripture concerning external acts or internal notions of the mind, agreeable to God and to one's neighbour, referring either to the law of nature strictly so called or not, which binds all men at all times, from the day when that law was first given. This obligation is first of all upon the Church."³

So in this aspect of law, as in all others, the will of God is supreme. The revelation of that will in Scripture is the ultimate authority for all men's thoughts and words and deeds. Parts of it may be abrogated by God, but only by Him since He is

1. De Causa Dei. Vol. I. p.110.
2. " " " " I. p.112.
3. " " " " I. p.121.

the only law-giver. Otherwise it stands for all men at all times.

God is above all law, and His will is the rule of all righteousness.¹

II The sovereignty of God and His eternal decrees.

Because of His absolute sovereignty "God has an unlimited power over man His creature and may lawfully dispose of him as He thinks good, for His own holy ends, even more absolute power than the potter hath over the clay under his hands."² This doctrine is nowhere more fully illustrated than in Brown's belief about the decrees of God.

Men by their sin have brought themselves under the judgment of God and deserve to be punished eternally for breaking the law of God. There is the human setting as Brown conceives it. But we may ask, How did sin come to be in a world over which God exercises absolute and sovereign power? The reply is that God did not create sin, but has allowed it to enter the world.

"God neither is nor can be the author of sin, being holiness itself. Yet hath He decreed from all eternity that sin shall exist in the world through His permission, and in due time doth He, through His actual providence bring this about."³ "God doth not approve of sin yet He willeth and decreeth that it shall be through His permission."⁴

Can man be blamed for sin? Can he be held blameworthy for what God has allowed to enter the world? Brown quotes Barclay the Quaker as making this very objection. "This proclivity and propensity to sin is necessarily imposed upon us, because God did decree it should be so."⁵

-
1. Romans. 9, 15.(iv)
 2. " 4, 25.
 3. " 9, 21.
 4. " 9, 21.
 5. Quakerism. p. 150.

But he will not admit Barclay's point. He has no final answer to the question. He does not find it possible to reconcile, on any logical basis, the absolute sovereignty of God and the blameworthiness of the sinner, but he will not abandon either. And for general answer to the problem he emphasises the mystery and the greatness of God, and the heinousness of questioning God and attributing faults to Him.

"This absolute power which God hath over man, whereby He disposeth certainly and inevitably of him, is such as doth well consist with men's culpability and guiltiness. And both these we are to believe, namely, that God has certainly disposed of the end of every man, and the means conducing to that end, and so hath determined that certainly and inevitably man shall sin thus and thus; and that notwithstanding thereof, man is culpable before God, and justly liable to the stroke of justice; albeit we cannot see through the connection or consistency of these: for there is no ground for any to say that God should not find fault: and yet this is truth, that the potter hath power over the clay, to make one vessel into honour and another into dishonour. There may be and certainly is a connection though we should never be thoroughly acquainted with it on this side of time."¹

Not only the whole human situation however has been determined by God, but the destiny of each individual soul has been settled by His sovereign will. For the glory of His name God has from all eternity laid down certain decrees about the destiny of His creatures. "God by an everlasting decree hath separated some of mankind from the rest, appointing them to everlasting life."² This doctrine of strict election Brown defines carefully in his commentary on Romans and in his book on Quakerism. The election of grace is not a vague

1. Romans 9, 21. (XIII)
2. Romans 9, 10. (IX)

or general election, but "those upon whom God hath set His love, are individually and particularly condescended on."¹ It is an election not for any brief space of time but from eternity to eternity, it is "permanent and immutable."² God hath decreed it and nothing and no one can hinder His purpose. His own will, as sovereign Lord is stable and unchangeable. There is nothing conditional in His decree of election. It has "no reference to the elect themselves, their merits or works. "He did it without any consideration of their good deeds."³ "The Lord was not moved to elect any to life eternal and glory by the consideration of any good in them or to be in them."⁴ The decree had no reference to faith they might exercise in Christ or perseverance in that faith.⁵ The only "spring and well-head" of His election is the "undeserved, free and matchless love of God."⁶ Out of His own sovereign good pleasure He has in loving kindness decreed from all eternity that these elect shall be saved.

The decree made in eternity is brought to fruition in time by the providence of God. "Their faith flows from election as a fruit thereof."⁷ He effectually calls them, He implants faith within their hearts, He leads them by "such and such means as He hath appointed."⁸

The decree is settled and fixed for ever. Nothing in a man himself, nor in circumstances around has led to the decree being

-
1. Romans 9, 10. (XI).
 2. Romans 9, 10. (XIII).
 3. Romans 9, 15. (VII).
 4. Romans 9, 22. (VI).
 5. Romans 9, 10. (XIV).
 6. Romans 9, 10. (XXVI).
 7. Romans 9, 10. (XV).
 8. Romans 9, 13. (XXIII).

made and nothing shall ever unmake it. From God's mercy alone the election has proceeded, and Brown magnifies the grace of God manifest in His decree. "The mercy which God showeth unto His own people is most tender, wonderful and inexpressible. His mercies are free and tender, they are infinite and large. So the glory of it be wholly and singly His own."

But now we must consider the obverse side of this decree. Brown is logical, brutally logical, in his conception of this. "Mention is made of election, which always imparteth the taking of some and leaving of others."¹ "God hath by His decree appointed the rest unto destruction and hath passed them by and reprobated them."² This is no mere negative act, as if there were nothing more in it than God's simple passing them by - Brown will accept no suggestion for perhaps an easier way out of the problem - "there is an affirmative and positive act, God's will ordaining them to destruction and eternal death."³

Those characteristics which Brown applied to election he applies to reprobation likewise. It is not general and confused but "peremptor and particular."⁴ Election to damnation, like election to salvation is most sure and not to be broken in any way. Once again, it is nothing in the persons concerned, their sin, their lack of faith existing or foreseen, that is responsible for the election, but God's sovereign will only. "As in the elect

-
1. Romans 9, 10. (X).
 2. Romans 9, 10. (XVII).
 3. Romans 9, 10. (XVIII).
 4. Romans 9, 10. (XIX).

God gets the glory of His goodness, mercy and free grace, so in the reprobate the Lord gets the glory of His vindictive justice and wrath."¹

This is a stern and distressing doctrine and Brown realises the difficulties of it. He calls this doctrine of election and reprobation "a mystery in itself."² "a labyrinth,"³ "a most profound business which carnal reason cannot reach."⁴ But he will not have any dabbling with suggestions which men may make to avoid some of the obviously difficult things in this doctrine.

Indeed he attacks strenuously such suggestions that men have made: and attacks them most bitterly because he sees their suggestions as undermining the truth of God's sovereignty. "The proud and rebellious adversaries of the grace and sovereignty of God measuring the incomprehensible God and all His ways by their own carnal imaginations and not by the sure revelation of His will in His Word, usually pitch "upon this point of reprobation which at first look, seemeth repugnant unto the fixed apprehensions of God."⁵

Two points arising from this doctrine of reprobation Brown goes into carefully.

First of all he considers the charge "that God predestinated men to damnation for the glory of His justice without any consideration of the man's sin. "Who seeth not what a palpable contra-

1. Romans 9. 23.(XXIII).

2. Romans 9. 10.

3. Romans 9. 14.

4. Romans 10. 1.

5. Quakerism. Ch. VII. p. 134.

diction is here?"¹ We must distinguish carefully between God's decree and the things decreed. Things decreed may have their causes and one may depend upon another, but the decree of God is absolute having no dependence upon anything without, being the absolute and free act of His will. "When the Lord decrees to damn some persons because of their sins, though sin be the procuring meritorious cause of damnation, yet it is not the procuring meritorious cause of God's willing or decreeing to damn."² God's absolute sovereignty is the sole source of His decree to damnation yet it is still true to say that the eternal punishment of the reprobate is for their own sin and is altogether just and right.

Secondly, and underlying all the opposed suggestions of the unorthodox, is the charge that to speak of God as so electing men from eternity, some to life and some to perdition, is to attribute injustice and cruelty to God. Brown repudiates this charge with the utmost vehemence. "Certainly we cannot reach the depth of the Lord's counsels, that are past finding out."³ Sometimes, he confesses, "the Lord's purposes may seem to us incompatible with the rules of justice and equity, and we cannot tell how to reconcile the same with the rules of righteousness."⁴ But even when all these things have been acknowledged Brown maintains that "it is a most unseemly and unreasonable thing to see the creature who has nothing of itself but wholly dependeth on God, quarrel with Him, Who is every way supreme and independent and doth whatever He

-
1. Quakerism. Ch. VII. p.138.
 2. Quakerism. Ch. VII. p.138.
 3. Romans 9, 20. (VII).
 4. Romans 9, 14. (VIII).

pleaseth in heaven and in earth."¹

The truth of God's "absolute sovereignty and unlimited supremacy" is for Brown written clearly in Scripture and these truths that proceed from it, however unpalatable, however difficult to accept, are nevertheless to be received unquestioningly. The final answer to all our questions is, "It is God's will." "Whatever He willeth must be accounted righteous."²

The question may be asked, "How is the fact that decrees of election and reprobation are eternally fixed, to be related to the practical work of dealing with men. Brown is quite clear that the knowledge of election or reprobation is not to be gained by any academic study or philosophical research."³

"The way to know whether we be elected or chosen of God is not to search into the secret and hid cabinet of God's counsel at the first. But by searching whether or not we be effectually called and the offers of Christ in the Gospel have been heartily welcomed by us. Effectual and inward calling is the best character and surest mark of a chosen vessel of grace."

So with regard to others the Gospel is to be proclaimed freely and prayer is to be offered and witness to be made in every way possible, so that all may be given the opportunity of making their own response to the call of God in Christ. He writes indeed,

"However the persecutors of God's people be using much cruelty and savage barbarity towards them, yet it is the duty of the children of God to be carrying christianly toward them, wishing well to them and praying to God for them, not knowing but there may be some of the elect among them."⁴

-
1. Romans 9, 20 (XI).
 2. Romans 9, 14. (IV).
 3. Romans, 9, 24. (VI).
 4. Romans 12, 13. (I).

The doctrine of election, Brown declares, is to be dealt with "warily, prudently and soberly."¹ It is within a realm of eternal things where God is supreme, and where man must be humble and mindful of his creature-hood.

III The sovereignty of God and the suffering of his people.

For men like John Brown who cherished such definite and absolute ideas of God's sovereignty, there was bound to arise questioning about the persecution which His faithful people endured. Why should godless men be allowed to sit in high places while the covenanting remnant was hounded to exile and imprisonment and death? How were such hard facts to be reconciled with the doctrine that God was in command? Brown has a clear-cut answer to such problems.

He sets down as his basic principle -

"Nothing cometh to pass by chance or fortune, but all events that fall out or come to pass, are from eternity, freely and unchangeably ordained and appointed by the unalterable determination and decree of the holy and wise counsel of God. There is an unalterable decree passed in the grand court of Parliament in Heaven, concerning all events that fall out in the world."²

From this general principle Brown argues that suffering however generally or particularly conceived is ordained by the sovereign will of God.

"Whatever affliction, cross, trouble, suffering, trial or tribulation any of His are put to endure, is not to be looked on as an accidental fortuitous event or chance, but as determined of the Lord who hath in His sovereign wisdom and counsel thought fit to have it so and ordered it that it should be so."³

-
1. Romans, 9, 10. (I).
 2. Life of Faith. Part 2. (VIII) p. 4.
 3. Life of Faith. Part 2. (VIII) p. 6.

Brown takes this principle as applicable to every aspect of suffering that men may endure. The particular kind of affliction, whether of body or spirit or estate, whatever form it may take, is of God's determining. It is usual that affliction is composed of many different elements. These too are decreed by God. The sovereign Lord also determines the degree of affliction that His people suffer. It never passeth outwith His hand and He sets the limits of it. It is He who determines when a period of affliction shall begin, and it is He who decrees how long it shall continue and when it shall be brought to an end. God also prepares instruments and uses them for the afflicting of His people. The whole determining of affliction is in God's hand entirely and is settled by His Sovereign will alone. "All is fixed by a peremptory and unalterable determination."¹

Brown now narrows down his general principle and takes up the question of Christian suffering within the will of God. It falls within what he calls His commanding will.² Suffering considered passively may not be so described. But the cheerful acceptance and the patient courageous endurance of affliction do fall under the command of God. There are times when God definitely calls men to a ministry of suffering. Certain objectives may be gained, certain duties performed, certain graces achieved only through suffering and therefore God has seasons when He lays

1. Life of Faith. Part 2. (VIII) p. 9.
2. " " " " " 2. Ch. 9. Ch. 15.

affliction upon His people. The history of God's children, in every age, the prophecies set down in the Scriptures, the example of our Lord Himself who suffered so much for righteousness' sake, make it perfectly clear that there are times and seasons when the Christian is ordained to accept suffering by the commanding will of God.

If it be asked when these times shall come and how they are to be recognised, the answer is plain. When the truths of God are opposed, when those who own God's truth are maligned, hated and persecuted, that is the time for those who love God to prepare to accept suffering for His sake. His people are not to wait for any supernatural revelation of God's call to suffering for them. Whenever "sin and suffering are set before us that we may make our choice and there is no third thing to demur us nor any fair and lawful way to escape the suffering but by sinning then we are to prefer suffering before sinning."¹ Christian men shall realise in such an hour that the commanding will of God is laid upon them.

It matters not how small a part of the truth may be called into question, it matters not how unclear a point it may seem to others. If men are clear in their own minds that part of the essential truth of God is being maligned and opposed (for this we must be rooted and grounded in the truth, having all established

1. Life of Faith. Part. 2. Ch. 9, p. 26.

upon the infallible Word of Truth) then it is for them to accept God's will which for them now is suffering for His sake.¹

But this is not all that Brown has to say. God has ordained all suffering, at times He lays suffering upon His people as part of His commanding will, but His sovereignty is over affliction all the time, He is in command always and He over-rules affliction for His glory. With massive quotation of Scripture Brown proclaims this truth "that the Lord ruleth and over-ruleth all that the wicked are devising."² He holds all in His omnipotent hand, and He guides and determines it for the accomplishing of His own great purposes.

The first of these is His own glory.³ All God's decrees and determinations have this as their final outcome. So the believing souls ought to be willing to accept suffering as contributory to the glory of their Lord. They should acquiesce willingly in all the means and methods His infinite wisdom has chosen. Indeed they should rejoice over the privilege they have of doing some little thing for His glory.

The second of these is the good of the Church. The church under persecution is awakened from the sleep of security that so often falls upon her. In herself she is made more pure and more zealous, more wholly the Lord's people. Her witness is made more effective since it is now verified by her suffering, others look and are impressed and are won for God. "Even by persecution

1. Life of Faith. Part 2. Ch. 9. p.29.
2. " " " " 2. " 10. p.53.
3. " " " " 2. " 8. p.19.

the Church shall be no loser."¹

The third of these is the good of the Christian sufferer himself. Though persecution be bitter and the time of trial be long and troublous yet declares Brown, "God can make it medicinal, doth so manage and temperate it to His own, as that it doth not prove noxious but many ways useful."² Brown is not minded to belittle affliction; he is too well aware of what God's people have to endure. In one interesting note, he describes times of tribulation as being "in the boots," for the word rendered tribulation cometh from a verb that signifieth to press and perish."³ And so Brown's very language is intensified by what his fellow Covenanters were suffering in Scotland as he wrote. Brown is not minded to belittle affliction, and yet he is certain that "affliction and crosses are so far from wronging us that we are the better of them."⁴ Increased prayer, patience, love, faith in God, dependence upon Him are the fruits that follow from a right acceptance of the suffering God has ordained us to bear. "Suffering for the cause of Christ in a Christian manner maketh the sufferers to be like Christ and to conform to the Captain of their salvation, as one now graduate or advanced to a higher class."⁵ All is of God, and in the midst of their suffering, believing souls "may mark the footsteps of royal sovereignty, majesty, wisdom, love, power, goodness, care and

-
1. Life of Faith. Vo. 2. p.131.
 2. Romans Ch. 8. v. 28.
 3. " " 8. v. 35.
 4. " " 8. v. 28.
 5. Life of Faith. Part. 2. p.120.

tenderness."¹

Nor are we to think of God's over-ruling Providence as being an impersonal law which works its will automatically and coldly. That is not how Brown conceives it. In the suffering of His people God has a part and His presence and His sympathy and His grace are the resources by which His people endure. "It cannot but be wearisome and irksome to a weak creature to be wrestling under a heavy burthen in a wilderness where he hath no company and can get no help."² But it is never so with the Christian. Always God is with him in the time of suffering, coming sometimes by spiritual, even miraculous revelation, sometimes unrecognised and despaired of, but always present, upholding, strengthening, making up to him in his own spiritual experience for all the losses he has sustained. The Lord Christ who Himself suffered makes known to His suffering people, great pity and compassion and a strong sympathy. As Brother and King, as High Priest and Redeemer, as Head and Husband and Redeemer He has pledged himself to his people for their comfort and their salvation. This presence of God with His people, this sympathy of Christ is no fanciful notion. It is real and practical, kindly, unchangeable strong and divine.³

Because Brown has such a majestic conception of the sovereignty of God, He has an unquenchable assurance that the righteous

1. Life of Faith. Vol. 2. p.65.

2. " " " " 1. p.137.

3. " " " " 1. Chs. VII & VIII.

cause will ultimately triumph. Through all his works this note of assurance rings out triumphantly and we can understand how his writings inspired and maintained his fellow-Covenanters in a struggle that seemed at times so utterly hopeless. The wicked might seem to prosper, but God was laughing at them.¹ In His own good time He would destroy their works and drive the persecutor before Him. The time of affliction might be long and trying, many of the faithful sufferers would endure unto death and would not in their lifetime see the promised deliverance and restoration of the Church for in this as in all respects "God bringeth about His purposes of delivering His people that He may show the glory of His sovereignty."² Suffering for righteousness' sake is suffering in God's cause and "He will be tender of His own glory and see to the vindication of His Name".³

And His vindication of His Name will find its total consummation in the life of eternity. There the elect will find ample and endless reward for their affliction on earth. There the wicked who have afflicted them will endure the pains of hell. We can trace in Brown's vehement language the pattern of life he believed to be followed by so many devotees of King Charles.

"Now they can get nothing of that for which they willingly lost glory: such as their cups, their whores, their gardens, their sums of money, their honours and voluptuous pleasures: nay the memory of these things will but increase their torment and grief, because upon the account of these and because of these are their pain and torment now the greater."⁴

-
1. Apologeticall Relation. p.14.
 2. Life of Faith. Part 2. p.200.
 3. Life of Faith. Part 2. p.208.
 4. Enoch's Testimony. p.215.

But for the faithful who have suffered in God's cause, "rich, excellent and glorious is their reward. Once "oppressed with approbry, reproach, hard dealing from men and persecution" but eternally rewarded in a way that "will richly make up all their losses and sufferings. When they are clothed with white, they will not think much of the blood and lives they have lost for God."¹ So His people will find final deliverance and God's sovereignty be vindicated.

"Whence we see" writes Brown, and he has been speaking of the sovereign power of God, "even in this bare moor, when matters look so hopeless, faith can hold a feast, and sing, and believe in hope against hope, and thereby keep up the head and heart of a poor soul, when it is like to sink."²

IV The sovereignty of God and our prayers of petition.

We shall see later that prayer was to Brown one of the great essentials of Christian living: but perhaps it may be asked at this point how the conception of petition is to be set at one with the absolute sovereignty of God. If the Lord makes final decision in every issue, where is the need for prayer, if all events are determined already from all eternity what is the good of praying?

Brown is quite insistent that whatever view we take of prayer the majestic and absolute sovereignty of God is one fact which

1. Enoch's Testimony. p.181.
2. Life of Faith. Part 2. p.210.

must not be in any sense belittled.

"We should beware to fix our hearts to any conception of God under one notion or another, lest we miss thereby that awful frame of mind which more general apprehensions of Him mixed with faith would help us unto; that He is, and that He is an incomprehensible, invisible, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Lord."¹ "He worketh and doeth all things according to the counsel of His own will."²

Yet Brown does not consider the sovereignty of God as in any way cancelling out the need for prayer or its value. He makes this position quite clear.

"We should look on prayer as a mean appointed of God, for attaining of the good things we ask and desire as preaching and other like duties are."³ "Our prayers must be looked upon and gone about as a commanded duty, and as a mean appointed of the Lord whereby such and such mercies and favours are to be obtained: and so we be put into a posture of receiving the good things we seek, more to God's glory, and to our own spiritual advantage."⁴

Brown will accept no suggestion that by our prayers of petition we break into the eternal order, or that we pray because we are dealing with a God who is capricious and mutable. Our prayers are among the means God has appointed, through which His ends are achieved. We must beware says Brown, "of thinking that by our prayers and petitions we could really change God's mind and move Him to alter His purpose and resolution: for our God is the true God and therefore unchangeable in Himself "and in His purposes and resolutions."⁵ Similarly we must not think that by God's condescending to our prayers, "He hath laid aside His sovereignty and absolute supremacy whereby He doth whatsoever He will. "He

-
1. Prayer. p.128.
 2. " p.218.
 3. " p.219.
 4. " p.148.
 5. " p.148.

remaineth an absolute Sovereign, an unlimited Prince."¹ The need and the importance of prayer lie in this fact that God in His mercy has appointed prayer as one of the means by which He works out His perfect will.

From all this it follows that our attitude in prayer must be one of humble submission to the will of God. We cannot tell what is the "secret unseen will of His purpose and decree," only the event makes it clear to us. Therefore we can and ought to pray for all things that seem to us right and good. That is one plain Christian duty, yet at the same time, we must submit all our prayers to the determination of God's eternal will. We must not be "sinfully bold and importunate, nor too peremptory, but patient and submissive unto His holy will and pleasure." Sometimes our petitions will run completely counter to the perfect will of God, always they are stained with selfishness and ignorance and short-sightedness.

With lowly submission to the will of God we must also await the answers to our prayers. Sometimes the answer is long delayed, sometimes it is not in the particular way we asked but in quite another that God's answer to our prayer comes, sometimes the only response seems a definite and blunt negative. We shall not become doubting or impatient if we remember that God is always sovereign, His will is supreme.

Brown concludes that our prayers of petition have two great

1. Prayer. 219.

purposes to serve. They are "a piece of that homage which is due to God from us, a solemn declaration of and acknowledging of Him to be God over all, the great sovereign and author of all good. Therefore we should not think our labour lost if we attain not unto satisfaction as to the particulars we pray for. It is no small advantage if by and in prayer we get more impressed with the necessity of submission to Him and with a due apprehension of God's majesty."¹ Furthermore our prayers may be the means which God has ordained to use for the accomplishment of certain of His purposes. We cannot tell if this is so in any particular petition we offer. It is our duty under the command of God to pray always, leaving the issue humbly in His hand who is the Sovereign Lord.

1. Prayer. p.220.

CHAPTER 3.

CONCERNING THE WAY OF SALVATION.

To Brown's mind the central problem of all human life is how a man may be made right with God. The greatest task of those in the ministry is to set men upon the way of salvation, and the supreme work of the theologian is to keep that way clear, untrammelled by heresy.¹

He deals first with man's need of salvation:

Man is sinful, this is the cause of the problem, sinful and so under the judgment of God. Death in every sense of the term, physical, moral and spiritual, is the "final upshot and end"² of sin. Brown is so careful of the omnipotence of God, the unlimited sovereignty of the Most High that he has certain things to say about sin which may well seem strongly put.

God of course does not create sin, "being holiness itself neither is nor can be the author of sin."³ Brown however has this to say: "Yet hath He decreed from all eternity that sin shall exist in the world by His permission, and in due time doth He through His eternal providence bring this about."⁴ So the sovereignty of God is guarded.

Sin being in the world man has fallen under its sway by a two-fold disaster: first of all by the original sin of Adam and

1. Life of Justification. Ch. 3. Quakerism. p.293.
2. Romans 6, 23. (1).
3. Romans 4, 12. (11).
4. Romans 4, 12. (11).

secondly by the sinful living of every child of Adam. Brown has a great deal to say about Adam's sin. The first man was created in the image of God and set in the world not only as the first and natural head of mankind but as the federal head of humanity, so that all men are regarded as being in him morally and legally.

With Adam God entered into a Covenant, a gracious agreement that if he would perfectly fulfil God's law in one specific commandment which however simple it may seem, set clearly the will of God over against the will of man, he and all those following, of whom he was federal head would enjoy the eternal unbroken blessedness of God. But if the law were broken death would be the penalty. Thus the first man was set in a state of probation, to choose positive righteousness by adherence to the will of God or death by disobedience. Adam broke the Covenant of Works and he and all mankind with him fell under the curse, still pressed by the claims of God's law but unable to fulfil it and faced with inevitable judgment.

Adam "being the stock and root of all mankind and being concredited with all the stock-purse of mankind plaid bankrupt, and the loss redounded not only to himself but to all his posterity also --- He was a public person and stood and fell as a public person representing all mankind --- His sin was not personal only but was the universal guilt of all mankind."¹ "This corrupt-

1. Romans V, 12. (11).

ion of nature whereby we are bent upon all mischief (which is commonly called original sin) is not to be looked upon as a defect only, but is properly and really sin before God."¹

This "original blot and vicious disposition come from Adam unto all his posterity"² has been made doubly vile by the sin of Adam's sons and daughters. "All have sinned actually against God and so are become guilty beside the sinfulness of their nature which they were born with;" "all strength and ability lost, understandings corrupted, wills depraved."³ So all men by inheritance and practice have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

What then of the penalty of sin? Here again, as in dealing with the origin of sin, Brown is eager to safeguard the utter freedom of God's omnipotence. His master Samuel Rutherford carries this regard for God's sovereignty to an extreme point. He writes in one place and the thought is expressed in many others,

"God would not be God if sin did not displease Him, for holiness is essential to God. But the punishment of sin is not formally included in the essence of sin, but is something posterior in nature to sin, already constituted in its entire essence: and therefore God punishes sin by no necessity of nature, nay if He chose, He might leave it altogether unpunished."⁴

Brown echoes this thought, though he never emphasises it in the way that Rutherford does, he is more greatly concerned with the practical facts of the human situation. He writes,

-
1. Romans V, 12. (IV).
 2. Romans V, 12. (V).
 3. Romans 3, 23.
 4. Rutherford - Apology. p.296.

"According to this rule of justice, the Lord (who according to His absolute power might have ordered things otherways, had it seemed good in His eyes) hath made death the just desert and punishment of even the least sin."¹ "God in respect of His absolute power might have passed by sinners and not have punished them. So that He punisheth, not by any necessity antecedent to His own free determination, seeing by no natural necessity He imposed a penal law, there being no natural necessary connection betwixt His dominion over the creature and His imposing of penal laws."²

Brown is reluctant to acknowledge that any necessity of nature is present by which God must punish sin with eternal death. Rather he would say, God in His absolute sovereignty has decreed that this should be so.

However determined, it is certainly the tragic fact of the human situation that all men are under the just judgment of God, and must receive the duly appointed wages of sin which are eternal death,

"All mankind has become abnoxious to death, and to all the miseries of this life which are antecedent to death and to hell-fire for ever. For by death we understand every thing that goeth under that name in the scriptures, and so takes in both spiritual and temporal death, with all the antecedents, consequents, or effects thereof."³

Such is the terrible plight of man.

Just as Brown saw every aspect of Christian living, in the light of eternity, so he sees the question of sin, its nature, its punishment against the darkness of an eternity without God. The penalty of sin is not to be seen in earthly misery or loss but in that "wrath which is to be revealed on soul and body for

-
1. Romans 1, 32. (XXVLL).
 2. Romans 3, 27. (XXXIV).
 3. Romans 5, 12.

evermore, when both shall be separated from the Lord, and the glory of His power and in blackness of darkness with the devil and his angels for ever and ever."¹

The men who die in their sin will suffer an eternal punishment of loss. All the bliss that Scripture describes as belonging to God's Heaven will remain for ever unknown to them. And their loss will be the more bitter because in the revealing light of eternity they will realise what their loss is and they will know that through endless ages that loss can never be made good.

Positively, there is indescribable pain and punishment for the man who dies in his sins. The most terrible of words and phrases are the Biblical efforts to describe this eternal darkness. Body and soul will endure punishment that has been devised not by man but by God; a body made more sensible, and a soul made more active, so that the punishment will be the more grievous. Memory of years wasted in sin, recollections of God-given opportunities allowed to slip will give keen edge to lamentation and behind all, the fearful thought that in the inflicting of this punishment "God will take delight and complacency."²

"All this will be endless, eternal and everlasting. No end, no hope of end. When as many years, yea thousands of years, yea millions of years are spent, as there are drops of water in the whole ocean, piles of grass on the whole earth and dust or sand, or what you can imagine; there is as little hope of an end, as at the first hour of a soul's being tumbled into that pit."³

Such is Brown's conception of the fearful penalty that falls upon the sinner;

-
1. Mirror, p.17.
 2. Enoch's Testimony. p.209.
 3. " " p.210.

"and such must be the lot of every son of Adam, apart from the mercy of God. For all men of whatsoever rank, quality or condition, are by nature subject to all the miseries of the world, liable to God's curse and wrath, and to hell for evermore."¹

God's plan of salvation.

The great word which Brown pronounces in answer to the terrible plight of the human race, is the word justification. He quotes with wholehearted approval the phraseology of the longer Catechism,

"Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which He pardoneth all their sins, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in His sight, not for anything wrought in them or done by them but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them and received by faith alone."²

In justification, so defined, Brown believes there is the glorious answer to the deepest need of the human race. This is the way of salvation which he expounds in such detail in several of his books.

Justification is first of all, an act of God's free grace. Over against the Covenant of Works broken by Adam at such frightful cost there appears another Covenant, one of grace. The three persons of the Godhead decree salvation for men and the Son accepting the call in loving willingness, takes up the Mediator's task. "Now there was a Covenant of Redemption betwixt God and the Mediator, and the Mediator undertaking, was obliged to perform all that He undertook and accordingly did so."³ There is certainly

-
1. Romans 5, 12 (IX).
 2. Quakerism. p.294.
 3. The Way, Truth & Life. p.76.

no thought in Brown's theology of a God unwilling to save.

"Though it was God against Whom we had sinned, Whose covenant we had broken, and Who in justice might have sent us all to hell, yet He, even He, out of His free grace and wonderful goodness, for the glory of His great name, contrived the great work of the salvation of His own chosen: by an act of sovereign power and dominion, He designed and appointed from eternity His only Son to mediate."¹

Here then is the source of salvation, "the fountain from which floweth pardon, righteousness and salvation." Brown calls it, the inward impulsive cause, the free grace of God, His undeserved mercy and goodness."²

The "outward impulsive cause" of justification is the redemption wrought by Christ.

"It was no injustice that He, an innocent person, should suffer for the nocent and guilty, seeing He was most willing to do so and took delight in it, and was the Head of His Church and so a near kinsman, yea and able to pay all and suffer and procure more glory to God than man's own suffering could have done."³

On the Cross the second Person of the Godhead, incarnate as Jesus Christ offered a real satisfaction to the justice of God most holy. He was the representative and substitute of His people. He underwent the curse of the law for them. "His death and sufferings were a ransom sufficient to satisfy justice."⁴

Brown makes a great deal of Christ's bearing the curse of the law for us and argues under this head that Jesus did not only suffer in our place, He bore the same sufferings in mind which were due

1. Romans 3, 25. (I).
2. Romans 3, 24.
3. Romans 3, 25. (XIII).
4. Romans, 5, 18.

to His people.

"Christ paid the very same suffering, that we were obliged to pay, but He being another and not the persons guilty themselves, His sufferings were not only a solutio debiti, a payment of our debt, but they were a satisfaction to Justice."¹ "The most clear demonstration of the governing justice of God was in exacting of Christ, the full penalty, and the very same punishment both in soul and body, that the Law of God made due unto transgressors ... Justice could not have required more and justice had not been fully demonstrated by less... The exacting of the very same, both as to kind and degree, kept a just correspondence with the requisite demonstration of the governing justice of God."²

The complete satisfaction which Christ offered to God by His perfect life and death is made over to men by imputation. Without this imputation all Christ's merits and sufferings might have been in vain: only so does a man benefit from them. Hence the doctrine of imputation is very important in Brown's thought. He sets out his belief very plainly:

"as a man hath no righteousness of His own, and in himself that will abide the trial of God's judgment; for if He should enter into judgment with any that liveth, they should not be able to stand before His judgment seat, and be justified; but all who are justified, are in themselves ungodly, and void of all righteousness that can ground a sentence of absolution from the condemnation of the law: so it is the righteousness of Christ as Mediator and Cautioner which is to them the only ground of their absolution and justification; and this Surety - Righteousness of Christ is imputed to them by God, and they are clothed therewith, are pronounced righteous by the Lord, the righteous Judge and dealt with as such. So that all righteousness which is the ground of their absolution from the condemnation of the Law, is without them in another who was appointed their Cautioner."³ This fact of imputation is a pivotal point

-
1. Justification. p.451.
 2. Life of Justification. p.451-2.
 3. p.24.

in Brown's theology and he will have no qualifying of it, no adding to or taking from this basic fact, that a condemned sinner has no hope in himself, that Christ has a righteousness which He is willing to impute, that if the sinner "flees to that righteousness, lays hold on it and leans upon it, he will find justification before God."

"The only righteousness by which we may stand justified and accepted in the day of accounts, being inherent in another, than in ourselves, must be made over to us, otherways we cannot be justified thereby."¹

Imputation is an act of God's grace - how then is a man to obtain it? What are the conditions he must fulfil before God will impute Christ's perfect righteousness to him? Brown quotes the Longer Catechism in answer ... "not for anything wrought in them or done by them but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them and received by faith alone" - received by faith alone.

There is no justification before Faith. Some of Brown's contemporaries spoke of a justification from eternity, but he will have none of it. To speak in this way is to confuse justification with the election of God. It is certainly true that when Christ paid the full price of redemption on the Cross, He was making "an absolute and actual purchase of all those that were given Him to be saved."² It might be said that all the elect were then virtually justified. But there is no actual justification before faith.

1. Romans 3, 22. (II).
2. Justification. p.281.

There is no justification by works in any shape or form, not in the open flagrant form by which proud men think they can please God of themselves, nor in any of the more insidious forms by which acute minds of Brown's period sought to qualify the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

Thus we must be careful not to speak of repentance as a condition of justification. It is certainly true that repentance is a God-appointed duty, and it is clearly linked with saving faith in God's dealings with many. But to give repentance the same interest in justification as faith has, would be to give a place for works which is diametrically opposite to the plain teaching of the Gospel. For "repentance is a special work and act of obedience itself."¹ Let repentance be a condition of justification and then men will have room to boast, for then they are doing something to earn their own salvation, but this cannot be. The New Testament, it will be noted, speaks often of justification by faith, but never of justification by repentance. It "has no instrumental acting on Christ and His righteousness."²

Nor is love a necessary condition of justification. Certainly faith works by love and faith will make itself manifest in acts of love. But it is false to hold as certain Roman Catholic teachers of Brown's day did, that love must be given equal place with faith as the instrument of justification. Not everything that accompanies faith in justification has the same interest or part in it. And the Bible nowhere speaks of being justified by love.

1. Life of Justification. p.363.
2. " " " " p.364.

Purpose of obedience had been given by Baxter a special place in his doctrine of justification, but Brown will have none of it.

The English Puritan maintained that the accepting of Christ as Lord is as essential a part of justifying faith as the accepting Him for Saviour. So obedience had as much to do with justifying us before God as faith.¹ This suggests to Brown that in the act of saving faith a man is being asked to enter an engagement with Christ as a man with a woman in marriage, or a soldier with a commander, pledging himself to certain duties. This seems to him a confusion of the essential issues. A man fleeing to Christ because he has been awakened to his sinfulness and danger under the wrath of God is so filled with the knowledge of his own impotence and inability to do ought to save himself that he has thought only to cast himself upon the mercy of God. To speak of a resolution to obedience is "inconsistent with the frame of a poor awakened soul seeking justification."² There might be the danger also of making the gift of justification seem not free, but of works, or at least a resolution to works. We are therefore wise to follow the Scripture's own language and speak not of the justification of obedience, but only of faith.

In like manner we must deal with the suggestion that perseverance should be called a condition of justification.³ If this were granted, by the very meaning of the word condition, no man could be justified or have the assurance of justification until he had persevered to the end. It is agreed that saving faith will endure to the end, but nowhere in Scripture do we find any

1. Life of Justification. p.377.
2. " " " p.381.
3. " " " p.382.

qualification of this kind being attached to the faith that is required of the soul seeking salvation.

Justification is by faith alone. Brown will have no qualification of this whatsoever. He calls such qualifications mere froth and a flourish of words."¹

Brown has emphasised the place that faith holds in the condition of justification. He is very careful to define his terms.

He will not have it at all granted that our act of faith is imputed to us as righteousness.² Certain of his contemporaries unwilling to lay aside all human endeavour and to accept only Christ's righteousness had spoken of an act of believing, as it is performed by us, in obedience to the Gospel command, as being reckoned to us for righteousness.

This cannot be granted at all. It is contrary to the whole tenor of Paul's argument throughout the Epistles. Always he sets faith over against works and declares that by nothing in the nature of works can a man be justified. But if faith as our act of obedience were imputed to us as our righteousness, then it is a work, a fulfilment of a law of God. "The meaning then of the Apostle's conclusion in Romans, 3, 28 would be this, "A man is justified by one deed of the law, apart from all deeds of the law, which were a contradiction."³

If this suggestion were granted, God could not be the justifier of the ungodly, for we would have that in us which deserved

1. Life of Justification. p.382.
2. " " " p. 22.
3. " " " p.289.

the name righteous, then we might boast before God of our own part in justification, then indeed the Cross of Christ would be made of none effect.

Nor will Brown grant what certain had claimed, that faith may be called our Gospel-righteousness, that is to say, "Christ has by His death procured a New Covenant whereof this faith is made the condition."¹ It was claimed that,

"it is an act of God's special favour and by virtue of His new Law of Grace, that such a faith ... comes to be reckoned to a man for righteousness: and through God's imputing it for righteousness, to stand a man in the same, if not in a better stead as to his eternal concerns, as a perfect fulfilling of the original law from first to last would have done."²

Brown maintains that this suggestion is a confusion of the two Covenants, indeed gives men another Covenant of Works instead of a new Covenant of grace. For faith is now given the place which full obedience had in the original Covenant of Works. So again when all froth of words has been cleared away, a man's salvation is to rest upon his own works, in this case his obedience of faith. And all of this is diametrically opposed to the whole teaching of the New Testament. Christ's righteousness alone, without addition or qualification, is to be imputed for justification.

How then does Brown define the place that faith holds in justification? It can be called the condition of justification if we are clear as to what condition means.

-
1. Life of Justification. p.327.
 2. R. Baxter. Con p.40.

Faith is not a condition in the sense of procuring cause, so that in some sense justification is the reward of our faith. "For this overturneth the whole nature of the Covenant of Grace and spoileth Christ of His glory."¹

Faith is not a condition in the sense of a potestative condition; that is, it is not set in the power and free will of man to believe or not to believe.

"For this exalteth proud man, and so parteth, at least the glory of redemption between Christ and man, and giveth man ground to sing to the praise of his own Lord, free will."²

Faith is not a condition in the sense of it being our legal title and right to justification, as if having played our part we can demand it from God. "We acknowledge all right and title to the blessings of the Covenant to be from Christ the only Purchaser."³

Faith is not a condition in the sense that Christ purchased something for all men alike and that conditionally. For then the basic difference between the justified and unjustified men would be this, that the former by his faith had achieved something which the latter with exactly the same opportunities had failed to achieve. And this Brown will not have, "for this setteth the crown upon man's head, who hath saved himself by his sweating, pains and labour, and spoileth our Lord Redeemer of His glory."⁴

1. Justification. p.342.

2. " p.343.

3. " p.344.

4. " p.344.

Faith is not a condition in any sense of the word which makes it purely a work of ours and an act of obedience to a command. For to be justified by this kind of faith would be to be justified by works.

On the other hand faith can be called a condition of justification in this sense. Christ had purchased all the benefits of salvation, all grace and all glory, for those elect in the fore-knowledge of God. By His work of effectual calling, the Holy Spirit "works them up to faith in and union with Christ, draws them to the Mediator, causes them to accept of Him and wait upon Him and rest on Him."¹ So God imputes to them Christ's perfect righteousness and justifies them. He adopts them into His family, the Spirit begins the work of holiness within their hearts and so carries them on to perfection.

"Thus there is a priority of order, Faith, receiving Christ and resting on His righteousness going before; and justification following, and a firm connection made betwixt the two, that whosoever believeth thus, shall be justified and none shall be justified who believe not thus."² "Faith is no legal antecedent condition, no proper or potestative condition, but only a consequent and evangelic condition, denoting a fixed and prescribed order of receiving of the blessings purchased by Christ, with a firm and fixed connection between the performance of the condition and the granting of the thing promised."³

Justification is an instantaneous act of God. It is not a work that is carried on by degrees, but a sentence pronounced by the Judge once and for all. It follows that it is perfect

-
1. Justification. p.345.
 2. Life of Justification. p.345.
 3. p.345.

and complete. It must be so from the first since it does not allow of growth or increase. It is adequate to all ends and purposes for which it was appointed. Forgiveness of sin, reconciliation and peace with God, adoption into His family, these are all in the act of justification, granted fully and perfectly to the believing soul. It follows also that justification is equal in all. All have an equal imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Faith may not be equally strong in all, but it is not the measure of our Faith that saves us but Christ on whom we lay hold. One may have more sins pardoned than another but all have perfect forgiveness. The state into which men are brought by justification is continuing and permanent, "not in the sense that God reneweth and frequently reiterateth the enstating of them into this new relative state; but in this sense that once justified always justified, they are fixed and preserved in that state." This is due not to any merit or sinlessness of their own but because the ground of their justification is fixed, lasting and permanent, the imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ. "Once clothed therewith a man is never naked or spoiled thereof again." The sins which justified believers commit, though wholly evil, yet do not break off their state of justification. All their sins before justification were forgiven and this pardon remains in force for ever. All their after sins are virtually pardoned and their obligation to the suffering of

the penalty for their sins virtually removed in their justification. "For therein was there a legal security laid down and given, that all future sins should not bring them under the curse or into the state of condemnation."¹ Sin always does stir up the anger and displeasure of God, who is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity, but it does not bring the justified soul under pure judicial wrath.

"It is one thing to be under the frowns and gloom of an angry Father: and another thing to be under the severe aspect of an angry judge."² "The afflictions and punishments then, that the godly meet with, being no part of the curse, nor of that satisfaction that justice requireth for sin, nor flowing from vindictive justice: but being rather fatherly chastisements, mercies and means of God, can do no hurt unto their state of justification, nor can anything be hence inferred, to the prejudice of that glorious state."³

One question remains to be discussed: what is the extent of redemption or, in the Biblical phrase - "Who then can be saved? To whom are the glories of justification available?

There were some in Brown's day who argued for a universal redemption. Several different interpretations of this phrase however were made. Some declared that Christ's death made it possible for God to forgive men upon the fulfilment of any further condition which He might appoint: some that Christ by His satisfaction for sin removed original sin in all men; some that all men are included in the reconciliation which Christ effect-

1. Life of Justification. p.274.
2. " " " p.275.
3. " " " p.278.

ed save those who deliberately refuse it. When all these various interpretations have been explored, it will be seen that to speak of universal redemption means the assumption, that Christ did not procure the certainty of salvation for any, but the possibility of salvation for all.

Brown will not accept such a view at all. He thinks it first of all quite out of keeping with all that lies behind the atonement of the Lord Jesus. The counsels in eternity by which God and the Mediator entered into the Covenant of Redemption, the mission of the Saviour, the way in which Scripture speaks of the work of Christ and its purposes, all of these are of so weighty and great a character, that it seems unreasonable to believe they were meant to issue only in a mere possibility of salvation.

Again, if Christ died that all men might find pardon for their sins, why are not all men pardoned? Christ's death was most certainly a satisfactory price, God did undoubtedly accept the work of His Son, there can be no barrier on God's side. The answer will be given that men do not all fulfil the condition of faith. This is merely to arrive at a worse dilemma, for to talk of faith as a condition in this sense is to reinstate justification by works, so abhorrent to the whole teaching of the New Testament.

Christ died to take away the sins of all for whom He died. This is most clearly stated in Scripture. If then Christ by His death has cancelled out the sins of all men, how can we think that

justice can punish the sinner in hell-fire for these same sins?

Surely all for whom Christ died must be saved; but according to Scripture all men shall not be saved.

Nowhere in Scripture do we find it expressly stated that Christ died for all men: the language most often used in connection with the death of our Lord points clearly in another direction.

To sum up, Brown maintains that

"Christ's death had a real merit in it; that is a worth and value to procure the good things it was given for. We cannot suppose that all that was procured and purchased thereby was a general, uncertain and merely possible thing."¹

And yet to Brown's mind such must be granted if we accept universal redemption. His own position is very clear and clearly stated. "Christ according to the good pleasure of His Father, laid down His life a ransom for the elect only, who were given to Him to save from wrath and destruction; and by that price purchased salvation and all the means necessary thereunto, for them only to whom in due time, and after the method which He thinketh best, doth effectually apply the same unto them and actually save them."²

So once again we are brought back to the remembrance of the sovereignty of Almighty God, which alone determines the destiny of men. For the elect who by the sovereign decree of God are brought from their sins into the glories of the justified state,

1. Life of Justification. p.555.

2. p.530.

there is endless cause for praise and wondering love. This note continually runs through all Brown's diffused examination of what justification means.

"O what cause is there here for all of us to fall a wondering, both that God should ever have condescended to appoint a way how sinners and rebels that had wickedly departed from Him, and deserved to be cast out of His presence and favour for ever, might come back again and enjoy happiness and felicity in the friendship and favour of God ... Let all the creation of God wonder at this wonderful condescending love of God that appointed such a way, and of Christ that was content to bow so low as to become this way to us. Let angels wonder at this condescending."¹

1. Christ the Way. p.70.

CHAPTER 4 - CONCERNING THE CHURCH.

"In Scottish history and in the writing of Scottish divines the idea of the Church holds a central and obtrusively prominent position. Those who made the history of Scotland by performing in her and on her behalf actions which have made her annals worthy of the name of history, set in the forefront of the battle and took as their battle-cry, Christ and His Kirk."¹ So writes Rev. John McPherson. It is undeniable certainly, that because of the particular circumstances and conflicts of the Reformed Church in Scotland, the doctrine of the Church was regarded as of the very first importance and the nature, constitution, government, order and rights of the Church figure largely in the writings of our Scots theologians.

John Brown regarded the defence and vindication of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland as perhaps his prime calling and gives great place in his writings to the doctrine of the Church.

This must first be said. When we speak of Covenanters, especially in this second age of the Covenanting struggle, the mind is apt perhaps to think in terms of a small focus, to think of little groups of men on the moorlands, narrow-minded and small-minded, niggling over petty issues, forgetful of the great and broad questions of the faith to which their minds were blinded as the hills of Galloway are concealed by the mists. But it was not so. At no stage in the Covenanting struggle, not even at the lowest ebb, did the men of the Covenant forget the great

1. McPherson. "Doctrine of the Church in Scottish Theology. p.1.

and abiding issues which were bound up in their own struggle.

Nowhere is this fact more evident than in the Reformed doctrine of the Church, which is never petty or parochial but always lofty and majestic.

Visible and Invisible Church.

Brown takes up a conception of the Church fundamentally different from both the Romanists and the Independents who occupied opposing ends of the line of doctrine.

To the Romans there was only one true Church and it was an outward institution.¹ Its present members are visible, its past members had been, its future members would be. It used visible sacraments, it had a visible head. Members of this church might be in themselves good or bad. What was required of them was an external profession of faith and the partaking of the sacraments which are perceived by the senses.² "The Church" to the Romans, "was a coetus hominum as visible and palpable as the coetus Populus Romanus or the Kingdom of France or the Republic of Venice."³

In the extreme reaction to this Roman externalism the Independents of the day refused to recognise any Church save that which was made up of true believers, who seeking admission to membership of this Church must give reasoned proof of the work of the Spirit of God within their own hearts, and were received into communion as converted persons.⁴ These Independents therefore conceived the Church again as a visible body, but this time made

1. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri. p.98.

2. Bellarmine "De Ecclesia Militante, Book III. ch. 2.

3. McPherson. "Doctrine of Church in Scottish Theology". p.135.

4. Brown Preface to Duo Libri. p.10.

up of people called and separated from the world, each one a regenerated soul so far as the Church could discern.

Brown, of the two conceptions, obviously sympathises with the Separatists agreeing that all members of the Church ought to be true believers. But he is in fundamental opposition to both, accepting the distinction, common to Scottish theologians, between the Church Visible and the Church Invisible.¹ He equates this distinction with that between the called and the chosen.²

"There is a company called out of the world by the grace of God and power of His Spirit to worship Him in Spirit and in truth: and this is that company which is called the Church Invisible because their union with their Head and with one another is by a bond of true and saving faith and sincere love which is not obvious to the eyes of men. As also there is a greater company of persons, called out of the world, to profess the name of Jesus and to worship Him outwardly, according to His Word and to own Him for their King, by submitting to His laws, ordinances and offices by an outward profession. And this is that company which is called the Visible Church because both their exercise and their bond of union with this King, and with one another is outward and obvious to the eye: to wit, an open profession of the true religion and outward submission to and following of the ordinances and institutions of Christ."³

It has sometimes been maintained that the phrase Invisible Church is a contradiction in terms since a church by its very essence must be something visible. But the passage just quoted makes Brown's conception of the words very clear. A church, as a gathering of men must obviously be visible. Brown means that the qualifications which are essential to membership of the true Church of God are in themselves incognisable by any human faculty

-
1. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri.
 2. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri.
 3. Brown, Quakerism. p.360.

and so cannot be the condition of membership in any community formed by the association of men.

"This distinction," he writes, "is not a distinction of a genus into species, for then the Church would not be one, nor is it a distinction of a whole into parts, as if one part were visible and another invisible: and yet though this distinction does not make two churches, many things are said about the church and attributed to it on account of the faithful and effectually called which do not apply to all the members of the visible church."¹

"The Invisible Church", he sums up, "consists of the total number of the elect, all who have been, are or will be gathered together in one under Christ their Head. This Church is the Bride and the Body and fulness of Him Who filleth all things. The Visible Church is made up of those who profess the true religion. It is the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the household and family of God outside of which ordinarily there is no salvation."²

So it is that by this distinction Brown avoids the dilemma which the opposing views of Romanists and Independents might seem to create. Rome recognised only the Visible Church. In view of its corruption over the years, the temptation among opponents of Rome was strong to rush to the directly opposite view and maintain that the only true Church was made up of gatherings of regenerated believers. Brown and his fellows adopted a different position entirely which preserved unspoiled the conception of a Church which was in truth made up of God's people, and yet had a place and a very important place for the visible organisation which men commonly call the Church. Of course great care had continually to be exercised to guard against both the narrowness

-
1. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri. p.115.
 2. Brown: Preface to Duo Libri. p.96.

of the Separatist view and the latitudinarianism of the Romanists who made profession of faith so much a formal and external affair.

Brown argues strenuously against the idea that only the truly regenerated are to be admitted members of the Visible Church. He shows that if this were granted there would follow consequences completely absurd.¹ "The administration of the word cannot be the ordinary means instituted by God for the conversion of sinners, if it is assumed that only converted men and women are within the membership of the Church. Ministers should not preach to their people anything to awake or convict or lead to their conversion all their sermons should be words of ministry to the converted. Many sincere people like bruised reeds and smoking flax, who cannot give definite witness to the time or manner of their conversion would be excluded from the church's fellowship. What of church discipline? The pious will all be within the church, and the impious outwith its jurisdiction. These absurd consequences make the truth clear that saving grace cannot be regarded as of the essence of the Church Visible.

Brown finds confirmation of his doctrine in Scripture.² He speaks of those baptised by John. Profession of faith was all that was required of them, there was no examination or inquisition. Our Lord Himself used similitudes for the Church which clearly show it to be a mixed company of elect and non-elect. He Himself admitted Judas into the fellowship of the disciples.

1. Brown: Preface to Duo Libri. p.915.

2. Brown: Preface to Duo Libri. para. 11,12,13.

The basis of membership in the Visible Church is therefore to be limited to profession of faith in Christ, not a feigned, theatrical, or openly hypocritical profession, but one that is serious, although there may not be the sincerity of grace or any heart conversion.¹ The Church member of course ought to be a converted man. Many members are, the Invisible Church is within the Visible. But they are not formally admitted in that character. There are accepted within the fellowship of the Visible Church because they sincerely profess faith in Christ and promise obedience to the laws of Christ. Brown carries this doctrine to the point of declaring that a church may truly be a part of the Visible Church and yet have not a single true Christian within it. He quotes the case of the Church at Laodicea. "It is recognised as a church though in it there was nothing of good, but rather that was found within it which was least consonant with saving grace."²

It might be objected that such a church membership was formal and unreal. Brown bases his answer on the distinction between calling and election. Not all who are called are of the elect, but though this calling does not lead to salvation it does lead to certain results which have proper place within the Visible Church. They have a relationship to Christ as Head of the Visible Church, from Him they have gifts, they are baptised, they are the objects of spiritual discipline, they are citizens and subjects of Christ the King.³

-
1. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 11.
 2. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 11.
 3. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 17.

Brown declares that God has a gracious purpose in admitting unregenerate folk into the Visible Church. They may within the Church be regenerated for the Church is the workshop of Christ. Ministers in the Visible Church are the instruments of conversion and regeneration. Such outward profession of faith was sufficient to admit proselytes to the Jewish Church, was sufficient to make a man a disciple, and was regarded as sufficient in Apostolic terms.¹ To Brown the Visible Church was a real kingdom of Christ. In it His laws and discipline were recognised, His ministers exercised authority on His behalf, His Word and sacraments were dispensed. It was a real kingdom and Christ was its King.

The Church - Catholic.

Over against the Church idealism of Rome, the admittedly majestic idea of a visible institution which included all Christian folk, had one head or centre, and observed the same sacraments, confessed the same faith, the Reformed theologians set a nobler idealism. They confuted the Roman charge that Protestantism had dismembered and broken the Body of Christ by maintaining that Christian unity was more real than Roman unity, "its centre being in Heaven and not on the banks of the Tiber."² The Kirk was not merely the Church of Scotland, it was the representative of the Church universal. Catholicity was an indispensable mark of the Church.

1. Brown. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 18.

2. Walker: Scottish Theology and Theologians. p.97.

Brown is a vehement protagonist of this doctrine.

"The Church of Christ in the earth is one. It is called catholic as being dispersed throughout all the world. This catholic church is not a genus, as if there were species of it, it is an integral whole "totum integrale."¹ He writes at length concerning the relationship of the particular churches to this universal church.

"To the Catholic Visible Church Christ gave the ministry, the ordinances of God, for the ingathering and perfecting of the saints: and all the members of this Church are bound to keep holy fellowship, both in divine worship and in the performance of such spiritual offices as tend to promote mutual edification. But since all the members of this church cannot in actual fact meet together for God's worship, particular churches, less or greater, are instituted as convenience may require. So all who in these particular churches have fellowship with each other in celebrating divine worship, also in some way have and profess communion with the whole Catholic Visible Church: for as I have said, there is only one Church of Christ, as there is only one King of the Church, one Head. For of this Catholic Church all the churches are members in particular: and though in their particular meetings they have a nearer communion with all the members of the visible church: just as the guests at a great feast have all communion, though that be more intimate between those who are seated at the same table or in the same apartment."²

As this universal Church is one, so the ministry of Word and sacraments within it is one and ordination is to the ministry not of a local congregation but of the church catholic. "In the first instance men are ordained pastors of the Visible Catholic Church."

The same principle applies to membership through baptism.

Any one solemnly received into the fellowship of a particular church by baptism is thereby admitted into the membership of the universal visible church. "Indeed it is into the fellowship of that catholic church that he is admitted by baptism primarily

-
1. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 23.
 2. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 23.

and according to the order of nature."¹ Hence there could be no rebaptising of those baptised within any acknowledged branch of the Christian church.

From this conception of the church universal it also followed that disciplinary action by any particular church should be recognised by the whole visible church. "Whoever is rightly excommunicated in one church is to be considered excommunicated in all other churches."²

Brown then held a thoroughly generous attitude towards the question of church unity. Baptism, communion, ordination and discipline were all conceived of as applying to the whole visible church, which was the real kingdom of Christ on earth, a majestic and universal unity.

It is when we consider the question of schism and separation that we find certain tensions apparent in the thought of John Brown. He sets down his general position: Particular churches, which are members of the Catholic church are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them. And the purest churches on earth "are subject both to mixture and error." The purest Church is never perfect but always is subject to some mistake and defect. In general Brown takes up the attitude of the earlier Scottish theologians that schism is a deadly sin, that separation from any branch of

1. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 23.

2. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 23.

the visible church is never to be undertaken lightly. Like them he multiplies reasons against separation and speaks of making severe sacrifices to preserve the unity of the visible Church of God.

On the other hand under the strain of the conflicts of the second Covenanting period Brown does recognise as grounds for separation features which would not have seemed so to his predecessors. The vital question is: What degree of impurity warrants Christian men in ceasing to recognise and have fellowship with a certain branch of the visible Church? Brown answers the question in these terms:

"It is permitted to separate from communion with a church in which we cannot have part without sin: for example when worship is corrupted and becomes idolatrous, or when some false doctrine is put forward. Separation is permitted also from a church corrupt in the fundamentals and where there cannot be participation in worship without sin especially if the faithful are forced to take part in such worship"¹ "Separation," he "adds," may be either in the church or from the church; that is either particular or total. Particular separation, within the Church, withdrawal from means certain practices and doctrines: total separation, from the Church when there is a complete break in communion."²

The statement would be accepted no doubt by earlier theologians like Rutherford and Dickson but we cannot but sense a difference of climate when we bring the interpretation down to matters of detail. In Brown's day controversy among Christian men was fiercer than ever it had been. And the questions that agitated the Church were no longer clear issues of faith or even clear questions of church government, but other such questions as: "Is it lawful to

1. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 28.

2. Preface to Duo Libri. para. 28.

accept the Indulgences? Is it right to hold any communion with the indulged? Is it right even to hold communion with those who hold communion with the indulged? Men who agreed whole-heartedly about every article in their Confession of Faith, who were totally committed to Presbyterianism and fiercely opposed to Episcopacy, still saw reason enough, in their varied answers to such questions as those given, to break off communion with their brethren. The general principles about schism are shared in common by Brown and his predecessors, but there is no doubt as to the change of feeling in interpretation. Schism is a dreadful thing to contemplate, separation from the Church or partial separation within the Church. It is not to be considered unless continued fellowship means sin. But as the Covenanting struggle drew to its close, persecution more fierce, controversy more heated, grounds for separation were accepted which would surely have distressed men of the previous generation. Perhaps it could not be otherwise. The defence of the seamless robe of Christ had meant to Brown and his fellows, banishment and poverty, prison and death. Defection in any degree was a dreadful thought. From anything of that kind Christ's faithful people must keep themselves entirely separate, not even touching the unclean thing; to do aught else was sin, and separation from such as did was justified as separation from sin.

Yet it must be said that even in Brown's day when reasons for separation were accepted which to both their predecessors and certainly to us would seem too rigidly drawn, the fact of schism

was never lightly considered. Nor did they consider themselves schismatics. Rutherford had written earlier of the Romanist-Reformed division, "Rome made the separation from the Reformed Churches and not we from them, as the rotten wall maketh the schism in the house, when the house standeth still and the rotten wall falleth."¹ Brown followed the same line of argument.

"Those who separate from the worst and greatest part do notwithstanding remain a part of and a part in the visible church.

Though people should withdraw from communion with the greatest part of the Church which is now corrupted they cannot be accounted separatists."²

The very elaborate way in which Brown, in various of his books and in certain of his letters, examined the whole question of inter-communion, makes clear his abhorrence of schism and separation. If he and other Presbyterians differed among themselves they did so only because they were convinced that these differences involved some vital truth. When a compliance made or advocated by some was sternly and uncompromisingly resisted it was because he regarded it as a surrender of spiritual liberty and a betrayal of the cause of God.

1. Rutherford: "Peacable and Temperate Plea. p.122.
2. Brown. Apologeticall Relation. p.292.

CHAPTER 5 - CONCERNING THE HEADSHIP OF THE CHURCH.

The doctrine of Christ's headship of the Church, the freedom and independence of the Church, as the visible kingdom of Christ the Saviour has been without any doubt the distinctive testimony of the Scottish Church since the Reformation. Every conflict of the Church from the early differences of the years that followed the Reformation in Scotland to the Disruption of 1843, has been concerned fundamentally with the crown rights of Christ the Redeemer. It was most clearly so in the Age of the Covenants and Brown of Wamphray certainly regarded it as his chief work to defend the cause of Christ as Head of the Church and to maintain the constancy of those who stood with him in the struggle.

The Kingdom of the Mediator.

Brown distinguished a two-fold kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Second Person in the Godhead, like to the Father in power and glory He has a universal kingship.¹ As Mediator He is King of the Visible Church.² As God the kingship of all things is natural to Him. As Mediator there has been bestowed upon Him the Kingship of the Church.

Brown thinks of this kingship in a quite definite way. The visible church is a community ruled by Christ, with its ordinances of government, with its statutes and discipline, through its appointed

1. Duo Libri. Bk. II. p.50.

2. " " " II. p.47. p.57.

officers.¹ He thinks much more than we are apt to do of the Church as the Israel of the New Testament, the Church of the Old Covenant delivered from its incompleteness and narrowness, brought into the full light and liberty of the Gospel of Christ. He loves to think of the Church of Christ as a real kingdom, ruled as truly and literally by the Saviour as David and Solomon ruled over the ancient people of the Covenant.

He writes: "This kingdom of Christ, or the church, is a community of men, ruled and governed by a particular polity."²

The Word of God is the sole authority for the government of Christ's Church. He speaks of the Holy Scriptures, our only statute and law book, in all matters of doctrine, worship and government."³ The Church is "founded not on any law of nature, but on positive institution and supernatural revelation: and therefore not to be governed in ways and methods of men's invention, but in these that are revealed by the Holy Scriptures, without which there cannot be a church."⁴ Nothing is to be introduced into the government of the Church, no officers are to be appointed, beyond what is set down in Scripture. He makes in one place the moving statement: "We do solemnly profess and in the sight of the all-seeing God, Who searches the heart and reins, that this and this only is the cause why we cannot give obedience to the laws establishing prelacy, for upon all the search we have made, we cannot find a warrant for it in the Word of God, that perfect

1. Duo Libri. Bk. II. p.61.
2. " " " II. p.61.
3. Vindication. p.39.
4. " " n.113.

rule of religion and righteousness, but find it contrary unto and against the precepts and institutions of Christ Jesus anent the government of His house."¹ The Word of God is the only statute and law book for the Visible Church, the kingdom of Christ the Mediator. Brown believes that Christ as Head of His Kingdom has instituted various outward ordinances and means for ruling His Church, these being the Word, the Sacraments and Discipline.²

The Ordinances of the Kingdom.

"Sacraments being a piece of God's worship must only have their institution and appointment of God,"³ and so are two in number. Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He uses the orthodox language calling each sacrament a sign and seal. As a sign of spiritual blessing the sacrament belongs to all within the Visible Church, the Mediator's Kingdom. All who seriously profess faith in Jesus Christ are comprehended in covenant relationship with God and thus are entitled to the privileges and ordinances belonging to covenanters. But as a seal of confirmation the sacrament is granted only to such as believe and lay hold on Christ.⁴

Discipline, Brown also regards as an essential ordinance of Christ's Kingdom. Though church unity was very dear to him, though separation and schism were regarded with horror he was no more ready than his fellows in the Reformed Church to accept lax views on church discipline. "To the leaders of the Church belongs

1. Vindication. p.9.
2. Duo Libri. Bk. II. p.63.
3. Romans, 4, 11. (IV).
4. Romans, 6, 4. (XI).

power to visit scandals, of pastors and others with ecclesiastical censures."¹ If the Church is to be kept pure and honouring to Christ its King then it must have this disciplinary power.

He deals in particular with two verses of Scripture from which he sets out briefly some thoughts on discipline.

The first is Matthew 18, 15-17. "If thy brother sin against thee go, shew him thy fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also let him be unto thee as a heathen man or a publican." Brown sees offences likely to lead to scandal as to be kept within the fellowship of the Kingdom. No earthly court is to be called in to arbitrate. So a privacy of love and a desire for the good of the individual soul and of the Kingdom as a whole, are to form the atmosphere in which such matters are dealt with.

He refers also to 1 Corinthians 15, in which Paul speaks of delivering "such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord," and makes clear his interpretation of these words. The infliction of ecclesiastical censures was for the spiritual benefit of the offender, and so discipline was to be regarded as a means of grace.²

Brown is very brief in his treatment of church discipline, no doubt because the principles were so widely accepted by the Scottish

1. Duo Libri. Bk. II. p.420.
2. " " " II. p.420.

Church. He saw it as an essential ordinance of Christ's Kingdom, necessary to maintain the purity of the Church, its chief motive not an inquisitive vengefulness, but a desire for the restoration of those who had fallen into sin.

The Officers of the Kingdom.

For the carrying out of the ordinances of the Kingdom Christ has appointed the ministry. Brown has a very noble conception of the ministry. Since the Church is so truly and literally the Kingdom of Christ, ministers are not only expounders of doctrine, faithful pastors or eloquent preachers. They are the representatives of the King, they stand in His place, His authority and power are with them. The call to the ministry is the most wonderful privilege a man may know, but at the same time and by virtue of its very importance, a solemn responsibility and a tremendous burden.

The right to undertake office in the visible kingdom of Christ, that is to the ministry of His Church, can come only through a call from God. "The office of the ministry is an office that none may meddle with of their own head, or take up at their own hand."¹

"The ordinance of the ministry is not an ordinance of man, though God be pleased mediately to instate some particular persons in the office but it hath its rise from heaven: God is its author, who therefore hath designed particular persons thereto."²

It is therefore a tremendous privilege to be so chosen by God.

1. Romans, 1. v. 3. (IV).
2. Romans, 10. v. 14. (XI).

"It is a singular favour and a gracious gift of God to be employed in and fitted for the ministry considering how unworthy and sinful such are in themselves, whom He employeth and what an honour it is to be joint co-workers with God in that great work of carrying on the interest of Christ and saving poor souls and bringing in to Jesus His ransomed ones."¹

But it is not an office to be accepted lightly. Since the call is from God and the work is the work of God, there is fearful responsibility bound up in the ministry. "Such as God hath commissioned and authorised for the work of the ministry, ought to go about their duties with gravity."² "The consideration of the weight of the employment, the regard in case of mal-administration, the many temptations and inconveniences that do attend such as are employed and the danger of running unsent should make men wary lest they engage in that office without a clear call from the Lord."³

As the appointed ambassador of the King, the minister of the Church is a man with authority and should be recognised as such by his people. "Ministers are men of authority."⁴ Brown declares and he sums up his belief.

"Howbeit the simple exhortations and friendly requests and admonitions of the servants of the Lord ought to be regarded, they being clothed with a commission from the Lord: yet when they are put to use that authority and to put forth that commanding power wherewith the Lord hath impowered them, people ought to regard the more what they say and their words when backed expressly with authority, ought to have great weight with people, and their neglecting of such authoratively enjoined duties will be a great sin, as being an avowed undervaluing and palpable flighting of the power and authority of God who hath commissioned them."⁵

-
1. Romans 12. v. 3. (IX).
 2. Romans, 10.v.14 (X).
 3. Romans, 12.v. 3 (VII).
 4. Romans, 12.v. 3 (III).
 5. Romans, 12.v. 3. (VI).

Of course Brown does not claim anything in the way of ministerial infallibility or absolute authority. For all of the Church together, ministers and members, the Word of God was "the sole statute and law book." Every ministerial message was to be tried by the Word of God, and only in so far as it was agreeable to Scripture was its authority to be recognised. Again and again throughout his writings Brown emphasises that the Word of God is the only authority for preaching and teaching.

"Let doctrines proposed seem never so probable and the proposers never so judicious and rational, yet that should not be a sufficient ground for us, upon which to rest persuaded of the truth of these doctrines but we must to the law and the testimony ... the doctrines of the best, even though angels, should be tried whether it be another gospel which they hear, or not."¹
"It is a duty lying upon ministers who hold forth truth unto people and press them to duty to examine well what they say and press, by the unerring rule of the Word, and to assert nothing but what they have a warrant for from the Word of God. They ought to speak nothing of their own head, but according as it is written."²

Brown conceived the Church as a fellowship under the Word. That Word of God set in its supreme place, the minister was to be revered and loved and helped and prayed for as a man of authority under Christ the King.

The relationship of minister and people is described by Brown in very rich and moving terms. The minister is set in the midst of his flock by the very hand of God. His task is to represent Christ the Saviour and the King. He is to work and pray for the saving of souls, his Bible is never to be far from his hand, he is

1. Romans, 3. v. 10.(II).
2. Romans, 3. v. 10.(V).

to be a man of prayer; with humility, with gravity, with courage and fidelity, with godliness of personal life and loving concern for his people, fulfilling his high and holy task. His people in turn are to give him their prayers and their love, their obedience in the Lord, their loyal and steadfast service.

In addition to the immediate call to the ministry which comes from God only and directly, Brown speaks also of a mediate call "which though also of God, yet is by the intervention of some deed of man ... church officers appointed to their office by the Apostles and so forth in succeeding generations."¹ In speaking of this "mediate call," Brown distinguishes two parts, the election by the people and the ordination by the Presbytery. Both are vital in his eyes and must be preserved from all interference by other parties. No one is to be allowed to discharge the duties of the ministry, to administer the sacraments or to exercise discipline who has not been legitimately called in the manner prescribed by the Word of God.² Brown has a great sense of dignity and orderliness in the affairs of Christ's Kingdom. It is most note-worthy how even amid the confusion and unsettlement of Covenanting times, he and many like him, laboured to preserve correctness of procedure and what they considered to be the sacred ordering of things.

While recognising the special call to Apostles and the like to exercise a roving ministry, Brown believed that "the ordinary exercise of the office is limited to some certain flock or other, which

1. Quakerism. p.368.

2. Duo Libri. Bk.II.p.67. p.131.

they ought to oversee and take heed unto."¹ Once a bond has been made between minister and people, by the due procedure of election and ordination, no power outwith the church can break that tie. As officers of Christ's Kingdom ministers are set in their charges by their King's appointment and no earthly power can interfere. "The ministry of the Gospel being by positive institution and appointment from Christ Jesus as Head and King of His Church; and the persons qualified for and called thereto in His own way, without dependence on the powers of the earth, being thereby constituted His ambassadors and messengers, they by virtue of this institution and their special delegation or mission from Him, are bound to exercise the ministry and office they are invested with, till it be taken from them in the way by which He conveyed and conferred the same upon them."²

The ministry is a high and sacred calling, for ministers are the officers of Christ's Kingdom, called by Him, empowered by Him, answerable to Him.

Christ's Kingdom and the Kingdom of the World.

"The Church is a society wholly distinct by its nature from the state."³ Brown quotes as his text for a whole section in the second volume of Duo Libri, Christ's words in John, 18,36, "My Kingdom is not of this world." If two kingdoms are to exist together they must be distinct. Christ's Kingdom and any earthly

1. Romans, 1. v. 3. (X).
2. Vindication. p. 39-40.
3. Duo Libri. Bk. II. Assertion. 16.

kingdom are distinct in the ends they seek to achieve. Earthly kingdoms work for the good of their subjects as citizens, for the enrichment of common life. Christ's Kingdom strives for the good of His people as Christians, setting before them spiritual and eternal good. In an earthly state there are differences of privilege, some indeed may be slaves with no status, others free with differing degrees of privilege. In Christ's Kingdom there are no essential differences as members of the Kingdom. There is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free. The officers of these kingdoms are quite distinct. Officers of state are appointed and dismissed by the will of men. All the officers of Christ's Kingdom are appointed by the divine will of Christ Himself. Christ's Kingdom and earthly kingdoms both exercise power and authority but there are striking and noteworthy differences in these powers. They differ in origin. The state has its power directly from God the Creator and Ruler of all things. The Church has its authority from Christ the Mediator. They differ in formal object. Magistrates deal with external things, ministers with inner and spiritual things. They differ in the exercise of power. Earthly rulers may reign absolutely. The officers of the church always rule ministerially. They are always subject to Christ and His Word. They promulgate but do not make laws. They differ in ends. The purpose of civil power is the glory of God in the good of the people. The purpose of church power is not only the glory of God but the glory of Christ the

Mediator. In mode of operation they are different, for the state works politically and the Church works spiritually. The penalties they impose are different, the state punishes physically, by death at the last; the Church by excommunication. In mode of defence they are different. The state has all the weapons of force and war, the Church the spiritual armoury of God.

Thus in many fundamental regards the Kingdom of Christ the Mediator and earthly kingdoms are entirely distinct and this essential difference is a vital aspect of Brown's position.

Relationship of Christ's Kingdom to the kingdoms of the world.

Having noted the essential difference between the Kingdom of Christ and earthly kingdoms it is necessary to speak of their relationship and here of course we enter upon a question which lay at the whole heart of the Covenanting struggle. Brown was in exile, many of his fellow-churchmen had suffered similar punishment, others imprisonment and death because they would not accept the theory of their relationship which prevailed in Scotland at the time. This was not to Brown nor indeed has ever been a question of merely academic interest, but one that entered into the very stuff of life.

Brown maintained that Christ is not only King of His Church but its only King and Head. By this he meant that in every church matter no depute headship such as that of the Pope or that of the civil magistrate is admissible. Everything belonging to the

doctrine, worship, government and discipline of the Church must be determined by Christ as its Head.

This doctrine of course was completely anti-Roman Catholic, for there was no place within it for the Pope of Rome. To be the Vicar of Christ would be a very tremendous thing indeed. He only could bestow such an office. But there is not in all the Bible any hint of a depute-Christ. The pervading idea of the New Testament is to bring men face to face with Jesus Christ Himself. He is the King alone.

The royal absolutism of the later Stuarts was also condemned by this doctrine that Christ alone was Head of the Church. Brown realised fully that the king's desire to dominate the Church did not proceed from any wish for the church's good, or from any strong feeling that he had a God-given charge to fulfil such a task. The king's Erastianism proceeded from the belief that the royal supremacy was more easily grafted on to it, and because bishops, royally appointed, were more easily handled than church assemblies. But if Christ were the sole Head of the Church there was no room for bishops, and more important still no magistrate could take upon himself any hand in the affairs of the church.

It was not that Brown gave no worthy place to the concept of civil magistracy. On the contrary. He held:-

- "1. that God who is the God of order hath instituted and ordained magistracy in the commonwealth for the common good of human and christian society.
-

2. that the magistrate is the minister of God for good to them that do good and a revenger to execute wrath on him that doeth evil.
3. that the authority or power which God hath given him for encouragement to good works and a terror to evil is not to be resisted.
4. that all persons within the magistrate's dominions, of whatever station, quality or employment are to be subject to this authority and give obedience thereto according to the Word of God, not only in respect of the matter commanded, but also with respect to the authority commanding."¹

While giving such strong support to the general principle that the powers which be are ordained of God, Brown was careful to guard against any support of absolutism even in things political. "We suppose it will not be denied to us that that the power of the magistrate is not simply absolute, but several ways bounded and limited."² He speaks throughout his writings of three such limitations. He recognises the need for parliamentary limitation to the supreme magistrate in the exercise of his power. He speaks a great deal in his Apologeticall Relation about the place of parliaments, though Scottish history provided a poor background. He calls members of such assemblies "trustees entrusted by the people whose commissioners they are."³ He speaks also of moral limitation to the power of supreme magistracy, "truth and righteousness to which it is astricted, and beyond which in its exercise it cannot rightly go."⁴ He speaks of divine limitations. Magisterial power is limited by the absolute and universal authority of God and His laws from which it and all other powers are derived and to which

1. Banders Disbanded. p.84.
2. Vindication. p.52.
3. Apologeticall Relation. p.257.
4. Vindication. p.52.

they are subordinate."¹

Brown heartily accepts the fact that civil rulers as such have duties toward the Church. These duties may be called ordinary and extraordinary.

In normal times, "though the exercise of Church power that is properly such, be independent of the Magistrate, yet the peaceable exercise of it is truly from him. It belongs to him, no doubt, to encourage, countenance and protect the Church against all enemies, and to relieve her of oppression when under it; to this he is empowered and obliged."² "The Magistrate is *custos ac vindex utriusque tabulae* the keeper and avenger of both tables of the law. And as in general he is to command all within his dominions to worship God according to His own Word and do that which is just and equal, so in particular, he is to command and see every one perform the duties, of their respective functions and stations: and consequently ministers also and church-officers to do the duties of their particular places and that under the pain of civil censures and punishments."³ Brown recognises freely that "the minister as a member of the commonwealth is subject to magistracy,"⁴

and he bewails the faults of those who "in preaching and exercise of discipline ... kept no measure, but yielded to impudence and passion."⁵

In extraordinary times, Brown yields a further place to civil magistrates, but naturally speaks in guarded terms. "

"As extraordinary evils require extraordinary helps, so the magistrate may do many things in a time of a church's gathering, backsliding or corruption which he cannot do so long as the church is in a well constitute and reformed condition."⁶

-
1. Vindication. p.52.
 2. " p.111-112.
 3. Banders Disbanded. p.84
 4. Banders Disbanded. p.85.
 5. Vindication - Introduction.
 6. Banders Disbanded p.87.

As the magistracy has a duty towards the church, so members of the church as citizens have duties towards the state. Brown is deliberately emphatic on this point and will have no citizen shirk his obligations. "Ministers of the Gospel should be careful to press subjection upon private Christians unto their lawful magistrates."¹ "The main duty which is called for from inferiors towards their magistrates is subjection, that is, to walk regularly under such as are set over us, yielding not only a passive stooping unto their sinless impositions, but an active concurrence unto the support and maintenance both of their persons and authorities, and in all their deportment to walk as such who are subjected unto them, yielding obedience in a respectful manner unto their lawful commands and humbly submitting unto their censures."² "This subjection should not only be manifested in their external carriage, but even in their mind and soul, thoughts and expressions."³ "The law of God not only binds us to carry ourselves as loyal dutiful subjects walking in an orderly and legal subordination unto such as are the supreme magistrates, but even to all whom God hath set over us in any civil place and authority, whether in a greater or smaller degree."⁴ "To this subjection unto the higher powers every particular private Christian is bound."⁵

So Brown makes clear that the Kingdom of Christ the Mediator and the kingdoms of earthly rulers are not in complete isolation from one another. Civil magistrates as such have duties towards the Church. Christians as citizens have duties towards the commonwealth.

But Brown's fundamental point is this: "that the magistrates' power is neither subject nor subordinate to the ecclesiastic nor to be confounded with it, but is specifically distinct from it and co-ordinate therewith."⁶ Their spheres of action are distinct. Brown conceives the Christian state as a theocracy after the model

-
1. Romans 13. v. 1. (V).
 2. " 13. v. 1. (VI).
 3. " 13. v. 1. (VII).
 4. " 13. v. 1. ((VIII)).
 5. " 13. v. 1. (IX).
 6. DisBanders Disbanded. p.85.

of the Davidic kingdom, a commonwealth in two inseparable, yet distinct parts. These parts are a pure, reformed church based on the Word of God, consisting of people and pastors called by God and elected and ordained in due fashion, and a state comprising the same people as citizens with godly magistrates set over them. Brown's ideal is such - *imperium cum imperio*, two independent co-ordinated governments, the one ordained by God for the material and social good of His people governed by civil magistrates; the other the Kingdom of Christ the Mediator for their spiritual and eternal good. The conception of course was not due to Brown. It is the system envisaged by the Second Book of Discipline. It is the conception which found immortal expression in Andrew Melville's words, "Thair is twa kings and twa kingdoms in Scotland. Thair is Christ Jesus the King and his kingdome the Kirk, whose subject King James the Saxt is."¹

Such a conception fitted in not at all with the absolutist tendencies of the post-Restoration era. King Charles II would brook no centre of independent power within his realm. The re-introduction of an episcopal system had as its chief purpose for the king the establishment of a system more easily controlled and managed. By the Restoration settlement of the Church, its independence and freedom were swept away. Because Brown and men like him would not submit to this royally imposed Erastianism, there followed the long agonies of the Covenanting struggle.

1. James Melville - Autobiography. p.324.

The whole great issue was gathered up for Brown in the Indulgence question. It is sometimes objected by those who read lightly over the story of these days that it was narrow-minded prejudice which prevented the Covenanting ministers and people from falling into line with the Indulgences offered them. Why should not the King give ministers freedom to preach? and why should they not receive this freedom and use it for good? Brown stood foremost in the fight against the Indulgences because to him they represented the very soul of Erastianism and the end of the freedom and independence of Christ's Kingdom, the Church. The accepting of the Indulgence was a betrayal of His Kingdom and a denial of the Crown rights of Christ the Redeemer.

Brown saw four great objections to the Indulgences. First, to accept was to deny that the origin of the ministry was wholly and solely from Jesus Christ.¹ New Testament teaching speaks of men called to the ministry by the King of the Church. The Reformed Church in Scotland recognised this as one of the great pillars of their faith. But to accept the Indulgence was to accept the suggestion that Royal Power had something to do with a man's place in the ministry. Brown noted with horror then that "when Hutchison of Edinburgh one of the first group of ten ministers to be indulged, spoke before the Council² he spoke of "receiving his ministry from Jesus Christ and omitted to add "only" in the traditional way of Scottish Presbyterianism.

1. History of the Indulgence. p. 85.

2. p. 24.

"When this was designedly and deliberately left out, let all the world judge, whether in this, they carried as faithful ministers of the Gospel or not. For my part I cannot but judge that this was a manifest betraying of the cause and a giving up of all to the Magistrate, for hereby they declared that in their judgements they had their ministry from others as well as from Christ."1 "Whoever will not confess that ministers hold their ministry alone of Christ, do derogate largely from His glory and rob Him of His prerogative. What an affront this is unto our Lord, let any judge."2

Secondly, to accept the Indulgence is to admit that in the exercise of their ministry, they are governed not only by Christ but by the magistrates either solely or in conjunction with Christ. "If Christ be said to give the office but others must give the power, authority and right to exercise the office, He shall be made a mere titular king."3 And of course the Indulgence essentially was an interference with the exercise of the ministry. Only men indulged were to be allowed freedom to perform the tasks of their calling and only in such places and to such extent as was granted by the government. Said Brown,

"the submitting unto any other magisterial and supreme autocratical power, in church affairs, than what is solely in Christ is an acknowledging of another Head and Supreme governor in the Church beside Christ. And this is a plain dethroning of Christ Who will either be sole King or no King."4

Thirdly the accepting of the Indulgence meant the acceptance of qualifications and rules for the ministry over and above those set down by Christ the King. Men who accepted Indulgences or who signed Bonds must guarantee to keep the King's peace. They must

-
1. History of the Indulgence. p.24.
 2. " " " " p.85.
 3. " " " " p.86.
 4. " " " " p.87.

accept instructions from the magistracy "and give assurance that these instructions would be kept. They must allow, by their very acceptance of royal permission not granted to all their fellow ministers, that the King had the right and power to judge the qualifications of men for the exercise of the ministry. To accept this is "to grant to the magistrates the robbing and spoiling of Christ of that sole supreme power which is due to Him, as a part of His prerogative royal."¹

Finally "It is also a part of Christ's prerogative royal to prescribe and set down the way how He will have such and such an officer in particular, set over such and such a flock in particular: that so the minister, so fixed to his special work may have ground to say that this is the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made me an overseer. But here in this Indulgence the matter is so conveyed as that the Indulged cannot with good ground say, the Holy Ghost hath set me over this people but only, this is the flock over which the King and his Council have made me the overseer."²

We cannot understand Brown's hatred of Indulgences and Bonds, nor indeed the reluctance of plain Covenanting folk to accept any form of compromise, till we understand that for them any acknowledgment of royal or civil authority in things spiritual and ecclesiastical, was part of a vicious endeavour to dethrone Christ the King. Rather than that, exile and imprisonment, a stake by the Solway, a scaffold in the Grassmarket would be willingly

1. History of the Indulgence. p.88.
2. p.88.

accepted - Nor from what we know of the character and intentions of the last Stuart kings, can we say that their scruples were without reason.

The interference of the civil power with the affairs of the Church, the confusion of the things that belonged to Caesar with the things that belonged to God raised this most important question. What was to be the re-action of the faithful? Were they to accept the royal authoritarianism? Were they to object passively or actively? We have noted elsewhere¹ the varying answers that were given to these questions by Covenanting leaders as the sorrowful years passed by, how for the stalwart aggressive mind of John Brown there was no doubt. From the beginning he spoke out for the righteousness of what he called defensive war, opposition in arms to the tyranny of the King. As early as 1665 he was writing,

"There is a great difference between active disobeying of, rebelling against and violently with force of arms resisting the lawful magistrate doing his duty and commanding just things warranted by the laws of God and the land and, disobeying his unjust acts and resisting his violent, tyrannical, oppressing, plundering, spoiling and killing armies."²

The invasion of Christ's prerogative was not to be tolerated and to Brown, Charles II in assuming the supremacy was plainly a usurper. In the following year he was privy, it would seem, to discussions with the Dutch about armed insurrection.³ In the same year he was hailing the men of Rullion Green for their heroism and bewailing the apathy of their fellow-countrymen who did not rise to support them.⁴

1. M.S.S. p.78.

2. Apologeticall Relation. p.153.

3. Memoirs of Veitch & Bryson. p.379.

4. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio LX. No. 44.

Throughout the terrible years that followed there was no doubt as to Brown's position. He was the leading spirit among those who would have maintained Christ's prerogative by force of arms. His views were not so readily accepted by other leaders of the movement who searched their consciences long before they drew the sword. It was not till 1679 and the years that followed that the Covenanting remnant made resistance an article of their creed; and it was no coincidence that their leader in these desperate days was one ordained by John Brown. Richard Cameron had taken up the mantle which Brown laid down, and sealed the self-same principles not only with a writer's ink, but with a soldier's blood. Brown was dead but his influence was surely strong when Cameron carried his principles to their logical conclusion and at Sanguhar Cross disowned Charles Stuart as having no title to or interest in the Crown or Government of Scotland which had been forfeited by cause of breaches of the Covenant, usurpation of Christ's prerogative, and civil tyranny.¹

There was no point in all Brown's theology more vital to him than this, that Christ as Mediator is King of the Church. For that faith he had accepted exile, and for it he strove long and rigorously. It was not for him merely an article of dry theology, it represented the deep devotion of his heart to Christ the Saviour. Erastianism in whatever form it made itself manifest was not merely an error in theology. It was offensive

1. Sanguhar Declaration. Wodrow's History. Vol. III. p.218.

in the very thought of it to all right and holy feeling - an assault in no mitigated sense upon His crown and nothing less than a turning of the kingdom of heaven into a kingdom of the world. Dr. Walker was certainly right for John Brown in saying, "The old doctrine of the Headship did for the Scottish Church what Rome tries to do with the Mass; it brought the Lord of Glory very near and gave gracious souls heavenlies' here below."¹

1. Walker: Scottish Theology & Theologians. p. 156.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCERNING CHRISTIAN LIVING.

Though John Brown gave himself so fully to the study of theological truths, it must not be thought that he was a mere dealer in religious theories, or even that his ideas found their expression only on the broad field of national and ecclesiastical activity. The Christian faith to Brown was very much a way of life. Exiled though he was from the parish which had called him minister, he always preserved the heart of a pastor, and throughout all his writings there is the constant reminder that religion must issue in Christian living if it is true and sincere. God's will for men is not that they understand theology but that they live godly lives; not only, indeed that they be delivered from judgement to come but that they honour God by the way they live out their lives before Him. He laments that,

"many of His own people are walking in darkness of ignorance and mistakes and remain lean through want of the real exercise of the life of faith which would make them fat and flourishing; because it would make them strong in the Lord, and to grow up in Christ in all things."¹

Christian living then, and all that aids and strengthens it, has an essential place in Brown's thought.

"This life which believers in Christ have gotten through quickening influence from Him is not an idle fruitless life without fruits of holiness, but an active stirring principle setting folk on work constantly."²

He writes very plainly in another place,

"Let such as are justified by faith in Christ mind the great duty of holiness and of growing in grace and

-
1. Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life. p.43.
 2. Romans, 6 v. 5. (XVII).

in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The way of faith is not to make void the law but it doth establish it. As Christ is made of God unto us Righteousness, so is He made Sanctification. As He is a Priest to reconcile us to God, so He is a King to cause us walk in the Lord, and to subdue our spiritual enemies. Therefore the justified should mind what they are called to and what new grounds, new advantages, new helps, new encouragements they have unto holiness."¹

Brown maintains that there are certain prerequisites of Christian living.

"It must be remembered," he writes, "that the person who only is in case to make use of Christ for sanctification, is one that hath made use of Him already for righteousness and justification. For one who is a stranger to Christ and is living in nature hath no access to Christ for sanctification. He must be a believer and within the Covenant ere he can make use of the grounds of sanctification laid down in the Covenant. One must first be united to Christ and justified by faith in Him before he can draw any virtue from Him for perfecting holiness. He must first be in Him before he can grow up in Him, or bring forth fruit in Him."²

In another place he speaks of certain things in detail which are "requisite to a living unto God." First, a reconciliation with God, for enemies as such cannot please one another. "A man's person must be accepted of God through Jesus Christ and he must be justified by faith in Christ, otherwise he shall never be in case to live unto God."³ Secondly, there must be a new principle of life within a man. "A dead man as such cannot live unto God, and a man without a principle of life within him is but a dead man. He must be born again. He must partake of that which is called the spirit of life in Christ Jesus."⁴ Thirdly, there must be "a hearty kindly complying with the law of God"⁵ as the supreme rule

-
1. Life of Justification. p.255.
 2. Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life. p. 95.
 3. The Mirror. p.172.
 4. " " p.172.
 5. " " p.173.

of life. The law of God must be laid in the heart of the man that would live unto God. Furthermore, there must be a willingness to walk by the guidance of the Spirit of God. The Spirit must be recognised as a man's "guide and director."¹ He must be willing to look to the Spirit for "counsel in dark places, for new influences of life when he is fainting, for strength when he meets with difficulties; he must so depend upon the Spirit of Jesus as guide and leader, that he may be carried on in the ways of God."²

It is clear that while Brown stresses the need for a man to seek holiness of life with all the strength of his being he conceives Christ^{ian} living, not as the result of a man's own resolution or unaided endeavour, but as the fruit of the Spirit manifesting itself in his life. To adopt a metaphor which he uses of the beginnings of Christian faith in a man's soul - Christian living "is a flower that grows nowhere by nature."³ A man's part is to put himself unreservedly in the hands of God, setting the glory of God before him as his constant aim, using every means of grace provided, keeping the channels open between himself and God so that the power of the Spirit may flow unhindered through him, making him what he could never make of himself.

"It is not a duty within the reach of believers which they will get accomplished of themselves. It will not be their duties, vows, purposes and resolutions, that will put out the life of corruption or weaken its force, but the only efficient cause of this work is the Spirit of God, Who sends down new influences of grace and makes the habit of grace to grow and flourish."⁴

-
1. The Mirror. p.173.
 2. " p.173.
 3. Romans. p. 467.
 4. " 8, 12. (XI).

It has been too often imagined that the life of faith as our Covenanting forbears lived it was a straitened, gloomy, fear-stricken life. Buckle has set the pattern for many in his statement that "their Deity was not a beneficent king, but a cruel and remorseless tyrant,"¹ and in his argument from that premise that "during the seventeenth and part of the eighteenth centuries some of the noblest feelings of which our nature is capable, the feelings of hope, of love and of gratitude were set aside, and were replaced by the dictates of a servile and ignominious fear."² Such language is completely untrue to Brown's conception of Christian living. He speaks of it in quite different terms.

It is certainly true that Brown and his fellows were greatly exercised about their spiritual state. The carelessness of men of the court whose sole interest lay in "their cups, their whores, their gardens, their sums of money, their honours and voluptuous pleasures,"³ the indifference of many of the common folk to spiritual things, these were dreadful sins to men like John Brown, who lived in the light of God's eternity, whose sufferings and hardships had served only to reveal further the corruptions of material things and the supremacy of things spiritual and eternal.

But the life to which Brown was led by his religious faith was conceived by him as the noblest way of life a man may know. He calls it a life of peace.

"Even when they hear nothing from without but the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war ... that may cause terror in the land of the living they

1. Buckle. History of Civilisation in England. III. p.239.
2. III. p.247.
3. Enoch's Testimony. p.215.

2. III. p. 247.

3. Enoch's Testimony. p.215.

are allowed to sing a song of triumph within themselves." Having peace with God they have peace within their own hearts and consciences, "a great calm in the midst of the most terrible storm of persecution and tribulation from enemies."¹ "This is the peace of God which keepeth as a garrison the heart and mind through Jesus Christ. And what will a strong well manned and well provided garrison care for the loud noise of a few naked soldiers? All the forces in the world cannot make a breach in, nor climb over the walls of this garrison. No flesh with all their terror can once brangle the inward peace of a saint, they cannot cause a mutiny there, nor harm blow up the magazine of their soul"²

He calls the Christian life a life of hope.³ Even in a time of sore troubles and of sharp trials a believer may win to this. "How deep so ever the sea of affliction be wherein they are tossed, their head is secured above the water: he cannot drown let the wind blow and sea rage as it will. What can he fear that seeth salvation before him? Can death be terrible to him who hath the hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised before the world began? What will a generous spirit care for a blast in his face, when he is going to possess a crown?"⁴

He speaks of the Christian life as one of "joy that may be had notwithstanding of all outward pressures." Believers may enjoy a life of joy and gladness which is the suburbs of glory where joy shall be full. How far preferable this is, believers know, unto the painted joy of the wicked."⁵

He rejoices in the assurance of the Christian life. Brown is not one to advocate that a man should presume to have easy confidence in things eternal: he is too conscious of the sovereignty of God and the sinfulness of man. But he does rejoice in the God-inspired assurance which faith brings to birth in a man's soul.

-
- | | | |
|----|----------------|-------|
| 1. | Life of Faith. | p.67. |
| 2. | " " " | p.68. |
| 3. | " " " | p.71. |
| 4. | " " " | p.72. |
| 5. | " " " | p.73. |

This Christian assurance has a double foundation, or rather God who inspires this confidence has given a two-fold cause to His children to rejoice in it, their election and their perseverance in grace.

"Believers by perceiving the grace of God in themselves and how God has efficaciously picked them out from among the rest of the sinful race of men, may win to know that they were chosen of God from all eternity and belong to His election of grace, to fortify them against all accusations and to persuade them that how many and how grievous accusations and crimes so ever their adversaries shall take against them they shall certainly be borne out and overcome."¹ And further, by the unchangeableness of God in His electing love, decrees and purposes, by the full and complete satisfaction wrought by Christ, by the work and interest of the Holy Spirit, it is certain that the elect will be perfected and finally saved."²

There is no doubt that the steadfastness and courage of men like John Brown owed much to this assurance in Christ.

Most of all Brown rejoiced that the Christian life meant a life of communion with God. His language, normally so restrained and sober, becomes almost lyrical as he tries to express the glory of this divine fellowship.

"Men may cast a man into prison that neither wife nor any of his relations shall have access to him; but neither lock nor key nor strong walls nor doors can keep out his God from Him."³ "Who can express the good and excellency of this life! No trouble outward can separate betwixt Christ and a believing soul ... O how sweet converse is this when a soul in the midst of its trouble can send a post to Heaven and receive a dispatch ... Is not this a noble life, that a poor soul may converse with Him, who is King of kings and Lord of lords and that in the midst of flames. And seeing such a life as this is can be had in adversity, may not such be said to live? What would a man more? What life comparable to this?"⁴

-
1. Romans, 8. v. 33. (IV).
 2. Quakerism. Ch. 15. para. 7,8,9.
 3. Life of Faith. Bk. 1. p.70.
 4. Life of Faith. Bk. 1. p. 70.

Such is Brown's conception of Christian living, no bare straitened gloomy existence but life to the full, despite the weaknesses of a man's own nature and the hardships of his circumstances. What life comparable to this!

The fulness of Christian living, to Brown's thinking, does not come to any man in a single moment of time. Certainly the believing soul in an instant is justified by faith in Jesus Christ but the process of sanctification is one that is continued throughout the whole of a man's life and is completed only when he sees Christ face to face. "The life of a Christian is nothing but a continual motion, there is no standing still for them here, they are upon their march and quick journey, hence it is often compared to a race."¹

Brown has no time for any doctrine of sinless perfection. He draws a very careful distinction between a man's standing in Jesus Christ and his natural state. He admits that the word perfect may be applied to believers, since their standing in Christ is so wonderfully complete.

"Why may they not also be called perfect, in regard of justification, seeing the righteousness wherewith they are clothed and which is imputed unto them is a perfect righteousness, being the righteousness of Jesus Christ?"²

But this use of the word perfect is very different from that which he understands the Quakers, for instance, to use. He attacks Barclay the Quaker who in his Thesis had declared that "the believers" hearts become subject unto and united with the

1. Romans 13. v. 11. (IV).
2. Quakerism. p. 330.

truth, so that they obey no suggestions, or temptations of Satan, and are freed from actual sin, and transgressing of the law, and in that respect they are perfect."¹ Barclay certainly qualifies his statement by adding that this perfection admits of increase, and that the possibility of sinning always remains if a man does not diligently and vigilantly attend to God. But his belief in sinless perfection Brown will not accept at all. His theology was too closely tied on the one hand to an intimate recollection of ordinary Christian folk, and on the other to a realisation of the awful majesty of the righteousness of God. Human experience had taught him the fearful grip that sin had over the soul, had taught him too the evident fact that "this life of faith admitteth of various degrees, and is not alike in all: "some have it in a greater measure, some in a lesser measure."² His study of the Word of God and his own communion with God had taught him the length and breadth and height of the Divine righteousness; that it is perfect, demanding utter obedience and that for ever, that it is spiritual, reaching not only to outward words and actions but the innermost affections and will and understanding.³

"Who," asks Brown "rightly considering these particulars will in sobriety speak of a perfection attainable here?"⁴ The Christian life is "a constant motion," "a continual walk from sin, hell, and death, and towards life, salvation, and communion with God everlasting." "Salvation by everlasting communion with God is the butt they level at, and the shore they are still directing their course towards, however sad storms may often drive them back a piece and push them to and fro."⁵

-
1. Quakerism. p.325.
 2. Life of Faith. p.81.
 3. Quakerism. p.336.
 4. Quakerism. p.377.
 5. Romans. 13, v.11. (V).

It is of course in the gracious will of God that all this should be so and Brown believes it is for our manifest good. If by the act of faith in Christ which brings justification, men were taken out of reach of temptation completely it would be "a pillow for beginners."¹ Believers would not then feel so great a need for the means of grace God has provided, prayer would not seem so urgent, the Scriptures might not be so often in men's hands, public worship might not be given its place. God has appointed these spiritual duties as the means by which, in the midst of temptation and trial to which we are most surely subject, we might find strength to overcome, and grow in grace.²

Brown makes reference throughout his writings to various aspects of the life of the Christian. Elsewhere we have considered the Christian's duty as a citizen and the Christian under suffering. Several other aspects of Christian living must be noted.

A man's faith is to be made manifest in the performance of his ordinary daily duties. There is no call to a separated cloistered life in Brown's conception of the faith. It is the midst of commonplace tasks that a man is first to give evidence of his faith.

"True Christian love is a notable mean to help Christians to the conscientious discharge of all their duties... like oil it makes all the rest of the wheels to go."³
"Christianity does not loose folk from following their lawful and necessary callings in a world; so it is the will of the Lord that Christians be diligent and careful, even in going about the duties of their ordinary calling."⁴

-
1. Mirror. p.87.
 2. The Mirror. p.85-86.
 3. Romans. 12. v.9. (1).
 4. Romans. 12. v.11. (1).

Brown is very careful to maintain the sole right of ordained ministers of the Church to preach the Gospel and to administer the ordinance; there is to be no laxity, however difficult the times. But he does recognise the duty of simple Christians to bear witness to their faith not only by their way of life and manner of work, but by word of mouth too when opportunity offers or duty demands.

"Even private Christians, keeping within the compass of their calling and station, may do much for the promoting of the work of God, by private instruction, admonition and reproof, and helping sinners in to Christ, by commending of Christ and the way of Godliness unto others, in a Christian prudent way."¹

Brown is most emphatic that the home and family life of the Christian ought to be dedicated to God. Marriage itself ought to be entered upon only in the fear of God with the bond of a common faith uniting husband and wife, as strongly as natural affection. This is the only true foundation for happiness in home life. "It is a brave thing to see husband and wife linked together in the bond of the Gospel."² When a home is established and blessed with children, with perhaps servants and workers as part of the household the Christian man has a pressing duty to set God in the midst. "What an honourable and advantageous thing it is to have God shining in love on a family."³ "How pleasant and comely to see families walking in the fear of God, all walking in their places and stations in an edifying and holy way."⁴ Family worship, Brown believes, has a vital part to play in preserving the "sweet harmony" of a Christian

1. Romans. 16. v. 3 (III).
2. " 16. v. 3. (II).
3. Prayer. p.90.
4. " p.93.

home, and keeping the family within the "suburbs of heaven." The duty to lead family worship lies upon the head of the house. If he find difficulty in expressing himself in prayer, his wife if she have fitness may help forward the work. Indeed better that a servant who has the gift of prayer should lead the family in worship than that it be omitted. But the responsibility is upon the head of the household. The most fitting times for family worship are morning and evening: in the morning seeking God's favour and blessing for the whole day, in the evening returning thanks for the mercies of the day, and rolling themselves over unto God's protection for the night. "How desirable a thing is this to see families like temples, wherein was daily the morning and evening sacrifice offered up upon the altar."¹

In his attitude to others a Christian's prime duty is love and charity. It may seem unexpected that such an emphasis should come from one so stern in his thinking, so uncompromising in his attitudes. It is certainly true for Brown as for his friend McWard that "love to God must be predominant and primary, and love to others subordinate and secondary."² And sometimes in his tormented age love of God made it necessary for faithful men to withstand others, even to oppose them on field of battle. But under that supreme proviso and even within the difficult circumstances that so often followed fidelity to God, love to others was recognised as a firm Christian duty.

1. Prayer. p.94.

2. Earnest Contendings. McWard. p.110.

"The duty of Christian love is a duty lying upon all ranks, qualities and conditions of persons and every one is to look upon it as a duty called for at his hand."¹ As our Lord defined to the scribe his neighbour as any man who needed his help, so our Christian charity is to recognise no bounds. "As to the affection of love itself, and the habit, it should equally as to its intensity terminate upon all men, be they saints, or strangers. Love is the sum, compound and drift of all the second table."²

A special degree of Christian charity Brown believes is required in our attitude towards weaker brethren. In secondary matters there will always be disagreement, many Christians never attain to the degree of liberty which stronger men in the faith reach, practices will vary, beliefs may not be uniform. The true Christian's part is not to despise or condemn those who have not reached the liberty he enjoys, not to force by disputation, those who believe differently into a resentful uniformity. In secondary matter of doctrine or practice, there ought to be charity among Christians, no one judging his neighbour, the strong not despising the weak, nor the weak regarding the strong as graceless. "There must be mutual hearty love and Christian charity, to sympathise with one another and to construe well what others do."

The controversies concerning the Indulgences, the payment of cess, the acceptance of bonds, and other public questions of the time occasioned much searching of heart. What was to be the attitude of faithful covenanted believers to men who did accept such compromises and incidentally warmed the fires of persecution?

-
1. Romans. 13 v.8 (III).
 2. Romans. 13 v.8 (V).

There is no doubt as to Brown's answer. Indulgences and the like are to be condemned as instruments of evil, there is to be very plain speaking to those who for any reason have yielded to the temptation of evil, but towards the Indulged and the compromising, as men and brethren there is still to be love and charity. In the very history of the Indulgence in which Brown reveals his complete opposition to any policy of compromise, he speaks of the Indulged as "dear to his soul," and adds, "I hope though they should despise me and despitefully use me, shall be so." Separation from the Indulged there must be as from "men tainted with evil, but only at the cost of "sinking soul-anguish and sorrow."¹

Brown goes further. Even the enemies of the Covenant must be loved, in the spirit of the Master. As agents of evil they ought to be opposed, ought to be resisted to the death, but as souls for whom Christ dies, as members it may even be of the elect, they are to be prayed for, they are to be the objects of Christian longing and love.

"However the persecutors of God's people be using much cruelty and savage barbarity towards them yet it is the duty of the children of God to be carrying Christianly towards them, wishing well to them and praying to God for them."²

Brown believed that the Christian life was to be lived in the light of eternity. It was this fact that gave to the Covenanters a seriousness about spiritual things lacking perhaps in certain other generations, and an unconquerable steadfastness

-
1. History of Indulgence. Preface.
 2. Romans. 12. v. 14. (1).

in the face of persecution and death. Since life was but the ante-room of the eternal world, since the Judge of all waited just beyond the door to give the true and final valuation of a man's life, how could it matter what evil men might do? In the false lights of the world believing souls might seem foolish and stubborn and narrow-minded, but the clear light of eternity would reveal God's judgment which alone mattered finally, and all would be vindicated then.

Living for God was "no vain fruitless and unprofitable labour, as some suppose. For there is a rich reward awaiting such as are seeking Him."¹ Brown repeatedly underlines the fact of this eternal recompense as a weighty factor in Christian living.

He is careful to point out, being always true to the basic facts of his theology, that this eternal reward is "not by way of merit, but by way of grace and free mercy, for it is purchased by the blood of Jesus."² How then can it be called a reward if it is wholly of grace? It is certainly not a reward in the strict sense of the word, as a hireling's wages are the reward of his work. Yet it can be called a reward of grace. God has appointed certain duties for the Christian, a way of life for him to follow, and He encourages the keeping of His laws by announcing promises of reward. The strength to do God's will, and grace to walk in His ways come from God only, yet in His condescending mercy He has joined to Christian living "a supervenient sweetness"³ by promising

1. Enoch's Testimony. p.175.
2. " " p.130.
3. " " p.168.

a reward to those who faithfully serve Him.

"So then we may look upon this as a reward, but yet as such a reward as is consistent with Christ's purchase and also with a free gift. So should we walk as if the reward were to be given in strict justice, according to and because of our seeking. And yet when we have done all to take the reward as the pure purchase of Christ, and as a pure gift of God, as if we had done nothing at all. And thus we shall be kept right betwixt two extremes."¹

In several of his writings Brown discourses at length on the Christian hope, like a traveller imagining the joys of home to cheer him on his journey. In several particulars his thoughts of Heaven are born out of his own troublous times.

It will mean deliverance from persecution. Believers will be "freed from all harassings, huntings, imprisonments, threatenings, and persecutions of enemies: which now prove very afflicting and troublesome: for then they are got beyond the reach of devils and devils' instruments."²

It will mean deliverance from all evil reports, "from all calumnies, reproaches, backbitings and the like that now they must bear to the breaking of their heart."³

It will mean deliverance from all evil tidings. No more shall faithful men sit as Brown must have often done listening to the harrowing news of what befell the beloved Remnant in Scotland, "sad doleful, grievous and afflicting tidings, of evil befalling others, as the church and people of God, or their own relations, which now causeth sorrow and mourning."⁴

-
1. Enoch's Testimony. p.169.
 2. " " p.153.
 3. " " p.153.
 4. " " p.152.

It will mean deliverance from all the temptations to compromise and sin that continually beset faithful men. No more heart-searchings over Indulgences and Bonds, no more serious weighing of compromises offered by men who held in their other hands the threats of suffering and death. "Satan's and the world's fair promises can work nothing on us there. We shall be set without the gun-shot of devils and men."¹

But it is of the positive enjoyment of the eternal reward that Brown writes most eloquently. "It will bear a secret and refreshing correspondence with their actions and sufferings here for God and His truth, though it will infinitely surpass and transcend all."²

The man that receives this reward shall be for ever with Christ. "What is all that is had of it here but as the earnest penny unto the whole sum? This communion and fellowship to come is far beyond anything that can be had here."³

Even more wonderfully, the soul shall then be perfect and without sin, for it shall be like Christ. Believers shall not ever share in the uncommunicable attributes of God, but there will be a full correspondence in so far as may be between these and the soul of the glorified Christian.

"The attributes of God shall become manifestly legible on the soul, as being imprinted thereupon as the wax doth answer the seal and correspond therewith, so as the lines of the engraving on the seal are clearly to be seen in the impression on the wax."⁴

-
1. Enoch's Testimony. p.153.
 2. " " p.133.
 3. " " p.156.
 4. " " p.158.

"All this sweet life will be increased by the company that shall be co-partakers with them of this felicity."¹ Patriarchs, prophets and apostles, the martyrs and witnesses of Christ in every age, all the spirits of just men made perfect, all the family of God and none but the family of God shall be there.

How should the "expectants of glory"² however despised and abused they may now be, find strength to endure and patience to suffer and might to overcome for ahead of them is this unspeakable glory. Writes Brown:

"Let the highest soaring wits that are, propose to themselves the greatest glory they can imagine, and let others come after them, and add to their highest conceptions, and so on till there are none more to add thereto: and if it were possible the whole quintessence of their united conceptions were molten into one mass or reduced into one comprehensive thought, it should come short, yea very far short of that mysterious glory which shall be revealed."³

-
1. Enoch's Testimony. p.160.
 2. Christ the Hope of Glory. p.21.
 3. p. 4.

CHAPTER 7 - CONCERNING THE SABBATH.

Brown's most voluminous work and that which has given him the reputation of being the greatest theological writer of the later Covenanting period is his two volume work, "De Causa Dei contra Anti-Sabbatarios Tractatus." In these volumes he discusses at very great length and in tremendous detail the whole doctrine of the Sabbath Day and almost every other cognate subject that might be imagined.

He is not content to base his doctrine on any single foundation. He approaches his task as a photographer might do when commissioned to make a full pictorial record of a certain place; approaching from different directions, taking his pictures at varied distances and levels, finally within the place making rapid shots to give an impression of the whole. And incidentally on the way demolishing the efforts of other men, less skilled and less true.

Two main principles Brown sets down as the starting-points for his argument.

First of all that a stated and definite time is required for worship.¹

All men worship by God-given instinct. "Experience teaches that all nations and peoples, however barbarous and blind, are touched by reverence for some Divine Power. And none of them deny that worship should be given to that Power."²

1. Vol. 1. Bk. II.

2. Vol. 1. Bk. II. p.242.

Of course it is our duty at all times to give God reverence but the other business of life must go on, other thoughts must have the concentrated attention of our minds. We cannot say that we fulfil our duty of worship by a continual vague sense of reverence. It follows then that while we acknowledge the need for God in all our thoughts, there must be a definite time set aside in which men can give themselves solemnly and thoughtfully, undisturbed by other demands, to the worship of God. We follow this principle in relation to other aspects of life, and surely we must also in this most important relationship.¹

It is obvious that the time set apart for worship must be sufficient time. We are not to make the error of setting aside more time than the glory of God and the good of man require: for the work of the world must be fulfilled. But time sufficient there must be, not only for public worship, but for family worship and for private devotions too. These needs must also have attention during this hallowed time.²

How then is this time to be determined, and by whom? No individual has this determining power.³ Whether he is a private person or one with magisterial powers, whether he is a member of Christ's Church or a heathen, there is no foundation anywhere to be found for the individual's right to determine the time set apart for worship. The absurdity of any other answer to this question, the chaos that would result, are obvious.

Nor does the Church have this right granted to it.⁴ This is clear if we consider first of all the nature of the time we are discussing and secondly, several characteristics of the Church.

-
1. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. VI.
 2. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. X.
 3. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. XI.
 4. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. XII.

The time to be set apart must have inherent authority to overrule men, it must apply to all men everywhere and it must be set apart for all time. The church obviously has no inherent authority to reach such a decision as this.

On the other hand certain things in the nature of the church make impossible for it the determining of such a matter.

To what body within the church would the determinating powers be given, to the whole church gathered together, to any single branch of it, to individuals appointed to represent it? How could such questions be settled with unanimity? Even if this were granted, those concerned would be fallible as they are human. Given that any decision in the matter was arrived at, would it be valid, could it be put into operation without the approval of civil magistrates? For the Church can claim no power to determine men's use of their time.

We are drawn to the conclusion that only God Himself can determine a time to be set apart for His worship.¹ God has created time and therefore alone is the Master of it. He only as God has power to set obligations upon the consciences of men, binding all and in perpetuity. He only has wisdom enough to determine such a time, to know men's needs, and to measure what time of worship will be adequate to meet these needs.

We conclude therefore that God has set apart a definite time for His worship. He has hallowed this time and ordained it for a

1. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. XIV.

special and holy use. It may be objected that all times and seasons are alike from this point of view, that one day cannot be more holy than another day. Brown distinguishes a time considered in itself and considered from a moral point of view.¹ In the first place all seasons are certainly equal but not in the second. Because a certain time has been specially chosen by God and set apart for His worship it is hallowed, in a way that other seasons cannot be. It is not morally holy as if it were an instrument of God's grace like the sacraments but it is holy in so far as God has willed that in it He should bless His people.

Brown maintains this doctrine in face of many who argue for the opposite opinion, that for the Christian there can be no difference between one day and another. Certain of these adversaries claim the liberty of the Gospel as their plea, they condemn the keeping of a special time for worship as legalistic and rudimentary, to be abandoned by those who live in the full light of the Gospel.² Brown will not have it so. The ceremonial laws of the Old Testament do not now bind God's people, but the setting apart of a special time for worship is obligatory for all time. As long as worship is a duty for men and women, so long must there be a time set apart for it. That time, appointed by God, hallowed for His worship must be distinguished from other ordinary days.

Perhaps the suggestion may be made that then place must allow for the same distinctions as time.³ But this is not so. It

1. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. XVII.

2. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. XVIII.

3. Vol. 1. Bk. II. Ch. XX.

is certainly convenient that a place be reserved for hallowed purposes, but the usefulness is accidental not substantial. Nowhere does God command that all men should worship God in a certain place; size of building, shape, decoration and the like are most obviously matters of secondary importance. Nature itself sets within men's heart the conception of a settled and hallowed time for worship, but it is not so with regard to place.

The Sabbath.

God has set apart one day in seven, as the time appointed by Him for worship, and considered by Him sufficient and suitable for this purpose. It is called the Sabbath because it refers back to the seventh day on which God rested from the labour of creation. It is not suggested that God was wearied by the work of these six majestic days for God is omnipotent. He solemnly completed the work and rested from it as a pattern to men, so that they might be led to rest from their labours and to set apart the Sabbath for sacred things.¹

When was the Sabbath instituted by God? This is a most important question, for upon the answer depend, as we shall see later, the obligation of the Sabbath and the scope of it.

Some have suggested that on Mount Sinai, the Sabbath was instituted when the law was promulgated.² But this is not so. We have reference to Sabbath keeping earlier in Exodus 16, 23. The

1. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. I.

2. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. IV.

wording of the fourth commandment - "Remember the Sabbath Day" - suggests a reminder of something already instituted.

Was the Sabbath instituted then in the desert, on the occasion mentioned in Exodus 16¹? If so then the obligation of this day might be taken as applying only to Israel in the desert. But it is not so. We miss in the story any solemn institution such as we would expect. Nothing is said of purpose or determination. Mention is made of it almost casually as of something already known, and every mention of the Sabbath in this chapter suggests indeed an earlier institution.

Jewish tradition has spoken of Mara as the site of the Sabbath institution, and the cleansing of the waters as the occasion of it.² But this is mere tradition and has nothing Scriptural to substantiate it.

Scripture teaches clearly, Brown declares, that the Sabbath was instituted from the very beginning.³ In Genesis 2, 3 the truth is set down simply and clearly. The six days of creation were alike in that God did creative work in each of them. But the seventh day was different from the others. The work of creation was complete. The divine work of maintaining the universe was clearly not abandoned, but no fresh creative work was done. God rested from His labours so that men might realise the need of taking this day from their labours for the worship and remembrance of God. Brown quotes in confirmation of his doctrine a mass of

-
1. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. V.
 2. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. VI.
 3. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. IX.

Reformed thinkers and the most important of the Fathers.

It may be objected that if the Sabbath was instituted from the beginning it is strange that there is no mention of it in the Genesis stories of the patriarchs.¹ But lack of mention is no argument against the fact of its institution. Such an argument would prove the Sabbath was not kept by the Judges, by Samuel or Saul and this we know to be absurd. Even if it could be shown that the patriarchs did not keep the Sabbath this would not disprove an earlier institution, since other early commandments of God, e.g. monogamous marriage were forgotten or disobeyed. There are points indeed in the Genesis stories which do suggest that the patriarchs did keep the Sabbath. We read that they worshipped God. They must then have had times set apart for worship, and these could not have been determined by themselves but only by the institution of God.

If the Sabbath was ordained by God from the beginning of the world's story, then traces of it should be seen not only among the Jews but among the Gentiles also.² Brown maintains that this is so. He quotes Greek and Latin writers concerning customs which seem to be based on a remembrance of the Sabbath. But it should not surprise us that there are so few traces. When the true God Himself was forgotten by the Gentiles it was to be expected that His commandments and institutions would be forgotten also.

Thus Brown has established that from the very nature of God

1. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. XV.

2. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. XVI.

and man a settled and definite time for worship is necessary. God Himself who alone has the right to do so, established the last day of each cycle of seven as the time chosen and sufficient for worship. On the pattern of His own rest after creation this day is called the Sabbath.

Brown now turns to prove that the Sabbath so instituted by God lays a moral obligation upon men.

First of all he approaches the question from the general characteristics of moral law. In his first book laws morally binding were stated to be composed of two kinds of law, natural and positive. Natural law that which flows necessarily from the very nature of God: positive law that which has its source in the direct command of God.¹

The law of the Sabbath is acknowledged to be, not natural law. It cannot be proved to flow from any necessity of God's nature, nor would its opposite be repugnant to nature. There is obviously no inherent goodness in the precept itself nor could we show any necessary connection between lack of Sabbath observance and evil. The Sabbath therefore cannot be called a law of nature, it is a positive law.

Nevertheless it is as morally binding as any law of nature could be. Brown calls it a moral positive law.

In Book I. Ch. 10 Brown defined moral law in these terms:
"It is that law, or that sign of God's will which is expressed in

1. Vol. I. Bk. I. Ch. IV.

Scripture concerning external actions or internal motions of the will being convenient to God and to our neighbour, whether they refer to the natural law strictly understood or not, which binds all men everywhere, from when it was first given."¹

To this definition the law of the Sabbath can be shown to conform. It is laid down by Scripture and it has never been abrogated by the Legislator or out-dated by its own nature. It was not given to one race only, nor for one era of time only, but was instituted from the very beginning of the Creation, made known to Adam as the father and representative of all and so applies to all men and for all time. It was not abrogated by the Gospel but was rather confirmed by the words and actions of our Lord.²

The Sabbath law is therefore called by Brown moral - positive, proceeding from the mere will of God and yet morally binding upon all men.

Brown confirms this fact by approaching the same conclusion from a discussion of the Decalogue.³ The Ten Commandments given to Israel on Mount Sinai are a summation of the universal moral law. It is the revelation of the norm of righteousness God has set for His creatures. All the other commandments are based upon this Decalogue and can be reduced to it.

Does this Decalogue apply to all men, or to the Jews only?⁴ Certainly the Jews had a special responsibility in this matter since to them it was particularly and solemnly given. But inso-

1. Vol. 1. Bk. I. Ch. X. p.121.

2. Vol. 1. Bk. III. Ch. XXIII.

3. Vol. 2. Bk. I. Ch. 1.

4. Vol. II. Bk. I.Ch.II..

far as it is a statement of the natural law the Gentiles cannot claim exemption. Once it is made known to them they are certainly bound by its precepts, and therefore Christian men, whether Jew or Gentile are now morally obliged by the Decalogue. Paul proves this abundantly in his ethical counsel to Christians throughout the Gentile world.

Is there any sense in which the Decalogue has been abrogated and therefore the whole of this argument invalidated? Brown declares that the Decalogue is only abrogated in respect of its connection with the Covenant of Works.¹ After the Fall indeed the Covenant based on the keeping of God's Law could never lead to eternal salvation. Yet this broken covenant must be satisfied and so was made necessary the work of our Lord. Because we are now in Christ as believers, because He is our Sponsor, we now fulfil the law. It would be clearer then to say that there has been a change in us with respect to the moral law, rather than to say that the law has been abrogated or changed. The unbelieving soul who has not trusted in Christ is still under the law of works, and so in New Testament language is "condemned already." The believer on the other hand is freed from the Covenant of Works contained in the law but not from the moral law itself as the norm and standard of his life.

That this latter truth is so is shown conclusively throughout the New Testament.² The words of our Lord and the doctrine of

1. Vol. II. Bk. I. Ch. IV.

2. Vol. II. Bk. I. Ch. V.

the Apostle Paul confirm this abundantly. By the work of Christ the believer is freed from the tyranny of the law, it is no longer the only possible road to salvation. The Covenant of Works binds him no longer, but the law upon which it was based and the Decalogue which is its summary are still morally binding as the expression of God's will for his living.

Now the law concerning Sabbath observance is an integral part of the Decalogue.¹ Certainly it is not in every respect similar to the other laws of the First Table - it is positive where they are natural - yet it is an essential part and must partake of the obligatory nature of the whole Decalogue. If it were merely a ceremonial or judicial law, what place would it have in this table of moral law? The very wording of the command, says Brown, the solemnity and repetitive nature of the words make it clear that God wished to underline the importance of this Sabbath law.

Brown has now on two different accounts proved that the Fourth Commandment concerning the Sabbath is morally binding, that Jews and Gentiles, under Old Testament or New, under law or grace, must obey its precepts.

We must be very clear however in discerning what is the scope of this commandment, in distinguishing the essential from the secondary features of it.

We must not seek to evade God's command by any spiritualising of the Sabbath.² Some would say that the words are to be inter-

1. Vol. II. Bk. III. Ch. XXII.

2. Vol. II. Bk. IV. Ch. XXXVI.

preted as meaning that every day is holy, that every day is to be freed from works of evil and given to rest in the Lord. This is to make nonsense of the clear precept. Mention is specifically made of one day for rest, of six days for labour. There is no vague spiritualising here, nor is there throughout the whole Decalogue.

We are not to interpret the words of the commandment as merely requiring an indefinite allocation of time for worship.¹ Some would have it so. That provided we give some time to sacred things, we are fulfilling God's law. This cannot be. The words could not be more specific - seventh. If it were not so, who should decide the time to be set aside?

Nor are we to say that public worship in itself is the complete fulfilment of the Fourth Commandment.² It is certainly the great purpose for which the law was given but it is not the whole of it. If it were so then a man might worship once only and so fulfil the law. Worship is not specifically mentioned in the commandment, nor of course any distinction between public and private worship.

We must note that the Fourth Commandment asks of men more than mere cessation of work.³ Certainly that must be involved in Sabbath observance, but it is not cessation of work that makes the Sabbath but the sanctifying of the day to God. The promotion of sacred exercises was not a means toward rest from labour but

1. Vol. II. Bk. IV. Ch. XXXV.

2. Vol. I. Bk. IV. Ch. XXXIV.

3. Vol. II. Bk. IV. Ch. XXXVII.

the precise contrary. The order of words in the precept makes this clear. The day is said to be sanctified to the Lord. This before all else is the purpose and basis of the Sabbath commandment.

One further point must be noted and that a most important one. Brown argues that the keeping of the seventh day as the Sabbath Day is not the substance of the Fourth Commandment.¹ This as we shall see more fully later is a most vital link in the whole chain of his doctrine. He maintains that God alone has the power to determine the time to be set aside for worship and maintains always that dominion over time. He has decreed that one whole day in every cycle of seven should be set apart for worship, but which particular day of the seven He can by His lordship of time determine from age to age. Brown makes much of the actual wording of the Fourth Commandment. "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy ... Wherefore God sanctified the Sabbath Day and hallowed it." It is not the seventh day of the week as such which is hallowed and blessed, but the Sabbath Day, so the hallowing and the blessing will be undisturbed if another day of the seven should become, by God's will, the Sabbath. This fact has been proved, to Brown's view. The Christian Church has observed from the beginning the first day of the week as its Sabbath, yet religion has not suffered, nor has God's blessing been withdrawn. The point of the Sabbath law is in number of days not in order. One day in seven, whichever day God,

1. Vol. II. Bk. IV. Ch. XXXIX.

in different ages may determine, preserves the justice of the argument. It is the principle of the Sabbath, one day of the week set apart for the worship of God, which is vital.

The Lord's Day.

In his Fifth Book Brown sets down and amplifies the affirmation that for Christians living under the Gospel the Sabbath has been changed from the seventh day of the week to the first. He has made clear his belief that the decision concerning days of the week is secondary to the Sabbath principle. He opposes on the one hand those of the older school who maintain that the seventh day must still be our Sabbath and on the other hand those of the antinomian school who will recognise no difference among days at all. It was obviously fitting, he declares, that the old Sabbath Day should be changed.¹ History has been broken in two by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. A new age, indeed a new creation, has been the result of His work. The Sabbath was instituted first for the seventh day because it marked the culmination of God's work of natural creation. How appropriate therefore that the Sabbath should now be marked on the first day of the week on which Christ brought to a triumphant completion His work of spiritual creation. If the day were changed for any reason less than the reason for the institution of the seventh day Sabbath, the change would be detrimental to the cause of religion. But the work of the redemption is no less, indeed is greater than the work of

1. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. IV.

creation. In addition the seventh day Sabbath so long observed by the Jews, had become encrusted with a tremendous deal of ceremonial which would have it difficult of adaptation to the new age of the Gospel. Better that another day be appointed whose only explanation was bound up with the work of Christ. He is Lord of the Sabbath and so has power over it.

It might be objected that in the Old Testament era the Law of the seventh day Sabbath was morally binding upon men and cannot be changed.¹ The law was moral to men but only positive to God, proceeding not from any necessity of His nature, but from His mere will. Therefore God has power to modify this law. When by the same authority which sanctified a law, a new law is established which modifies or cancels the first, it is the new law that must be observed.

The establishment of the first-day Sabbath Brown sees clearly set down in the New Testament.

First, by the Resurrection of the Lord.² He rose in the early hours of the first day of the week. Then He rested from the work of redemption. Certainly He died on the Friday but between this and His Resurrection He was in a state of humiliation. The work was not complete, His status as Saviour was not vindicated, He could not be said to rest from His redemptive labours till He rose from the dead. This culmination of redemption took place on the first day of the week. This could be no casual

1. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. VI.

2. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. IX.

happening but was ordained by God to take place on this particular day. The parallelism with God's rest after Creation and the institution of the first day Sabbath is most striking. If it be objected that Christ did certain things on the day of His Resurrection and so cancelled out its Sabbath significance, it could at once be returned that God too did work on the first Sabbath, the maintenance and preservation of the world He had made.

It is clear that the Scriptural mentions of Christ's appearances to His disciples make of this Resurrection Day and its weekly counterparts a day of special significance.¹ We are not told of appearances of our Lord on any other day of the week than the first. These no doubt took place, but they are not mentioned. This is surely significant. When He appeared on these days the disciples are said to be gathered together and Jesus spoke with them of hallowed and sacred things.

Throughout the New Testament there are references to the special setting aside of the first day of the week.² We read of gatherings for worship on this day and Paul in the Epistles takes it for granted that the Church will be meeting together on the first day of the week. Brown lays particular stress on Revelation, 1, 10, where John speaks of the Lord's Day. This was certainly not the seventh day Sabbath which was never so called. It is clearly a day set apart as the Lord's, and casual reference to it assumes that all his brethren will know which day

1. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. X.

2. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. XII, XIII, XIV.

he has in mind.

From Apostolic times the observance of the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, as the Lord's Day has continued. The writings of the Fathers make it clear that this was their regular and unquestioned practice.¹

It is probable, writes Brown, that our Lord himself instituted the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath.² We have seen that there was reason in plenty for the alteration of the day, and that Christ by His own example made it a day different from other days. As early as the time of the Acts it was the recognised day for Christian worship, and John in the Revelation uses a phrase - the Lord's Day - which has a striking resemblance to that other phrase - the Lord's Supper - referring to a particular institution of our Lord. It is probable therefore, to Brown's mind, that the observance of the first day of the week as the new Sabbath was of our Lord's own institution.

But even if he must admit that the Lord's Day observance was instituted by the Apostles, Brown still maintains that the inspiration of God is behind it and the authority of God in it.³ The apostolic example in this respect is very clearly set forth in Scripture so as to be able to claim definite Scriptural authority. "Those things which the Apostles did, not by private and fallible will, but under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit are themselves divinely inspired."

1. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. XV.

2. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. XVII.

3. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. XX.

It is certainly not true to say that the observance of the Lord's Day is a mere rule of the Church, established by ecclesiastical constitution.¹ We have seen already that the Church has no power to act in this matter, and that even if it had the practical difficulties of settling the question would be insurmountable. Then there would be nothing religious or moral involved - merely a church law - and the worst of Brown's adversaries does not maintain this.

Nor is the Lord's Day a matter merely of custom and habit.² It takes time for any observance to become general on a foundation of custom alone. Invariably there are differences of opinion, many a time there are controversies where there is no authority greater than mere habit. There is no suggestion of anything like this anywhere in the New Testament. As early as the story is told the Lord's Day is accepted and observed by all Christians. They felt themselves part of the new creation accomplished by Christ's redemptive work and following their Lord's example and direct or indirect institution, they kept the first day of the week as hallowed and sacred.

The Lord's Day can justly be called the Christian Sabbath or merely the Sabbath.³ The principle of it and the observation of it are not new things, but the world-old Sabbath law adapted to the new age of the Gospel. We have seen that the Decalogue

1. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. XXI.
2. Vol. II. Bk. V. Ch. XXII.
3. Vol. II. Ch. VI. Ch. III.

and the fourth commandment in particular have not been abrogated, but still are morally binding. Though the order of days be now changed the principle remains unalterable. As the Jewish Sabbath bound Israel so the Lord's Day is equally obligatory to all who live in the dispensation of grace.

It is true that in the Old Testament the observance of the Sabbath had certain additions to it which do not now apply. The breaking of the Sabbath to do work was punishable by death. That was part of the judicial law of Israel which has no authority over us. Burying and anointing were forbidden on the Sabbath. This and certain other Jewish practices were part of the ceremonial law which has been altogether abrogated by the coming of Jesus Christ. But such additional things set aside, the law of the Sabbath laid down by God for Adam in his innocence and for all his children, binds us still. The day has been changed. The principle remains.

How then is this day to be observed?

Brown is most concerned to answer the question in a positive way. The Lord's day is not to be thought of primarily as a day on which we avoid or stop doing certain things. It is a day set apart for God, and for high and holy purposes. It is our joyful witness that we acknowledge^d God. It is a welcomed opportunity for spiritual exercises that cannot so easily be made possible for us on other days.¹

1. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXVII.

Certainly our mind is to be taken from secular things if this hallowed purpose of the Sabbath is to be fulfilled. Hence it is that certain works only are to be allowed on the Lord's Day.

Any kind of work which impedes the celebration of the Sabbath must be forbidden, work which is normally done on other days, servile work, work which is not consistent with the sanctity of the Lord's Day.¹

Certain work may still be performed on the Sabbath.² Works of honesty, things which have to do with decency and decorum such as the putting on of clothes: works of piety, those which have direct concern with the worship and glory of God: works of piety and charity, the saving of life, the helping of those in great need: works of necessity, defence against enemies, the extinguishing of fire. Brown speaks a little of the special conditions which may prevail in time of war. Then things may be regarded as necessary, which are not so at other times. But necessity must be a proven one, not caused by our fault, not for gain or pleasure, not constant or perpetual.

Positively, we ought to give careful consideration as to how we prepare for the Sabbath, how we spend it, and how it ought to influence the days that follow.³

On the previous night we should withdraw our minds from all worldly concerns, confessing the sins of the past week and seeking God's forgiveness, recalling the greatness of God and resting in

1. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXIV.

2. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXIV.

3. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXIX.

Christ's redemption. Our dressing as the day begins should be simple and modest and reverent. In all our thoughts God should have first place, our whole minds be given to His worship.

During the Sabbath, worship should take three forms, public, family and private.

Public exercises should have full and fitting place.¹ Men are robbing God who speak of one morning service as quite sufficient. The whole day is set apart for the worship of God. There should be praise in our worship, but only those forms of praise for which we have spiritual authority, the Psalms and the hymns within the Word of God. Prayer also must have its place, a very important place, but Brown has no use for liturgies. He denounces liturgical prayers out of hand. He can see no Scriptural warrant for them - the Lord's Prayer was given by our Lord as a pattern not a formula - and he believes they make for mere formality and outright insincerity. Who will deny, he asks, that God is more greatly glorified by prayers from the heart formed by the Spirit and expressed in words taught by the same Spirit, than in prescribed liturgical formulae repeated ad nauseam and recited too often without sense. Reading of Scripture and preaching of the Word are to be done by those called and ordained to this office. They are to preach Christ, Christ as our Redemption, Sanctification, Wisdom. Lectures after the Scottish pattern, longer exposition of passages from the Word of God are very useful to Brown's mind

1. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXVI.

and merit a place in Sabbath worship. So the whole of the Bible Old Testament and New Testament may be expounded systematically.

In the administration of the Sacraments a minister ought not to be bound by any liturgical formulae. He should use the gifts with which the Spirit has endowed him.

During Sabbath worship there ought to be an offering made for the needy. This has ample Scripture authority and is right and proper.

In regard to our family life the Sabbath Day ought to be exerting its gracious influences.¹ In addition to the public worship in which the family joins, there should be family worship, father of the household should instruct, and catechise children and servants in his charge. He should make this whole day one in which he labours for the spiritual good of all within his family circle.

Privately we ought to spend much time in prayer, in the reading of scripture, and in meditating upon holy things.²

In the days of the week that follow the Sabbath we ought to be mindful of the Lord's Day, calling to mind all that we have heard and done in it, endeavouring to bring the practice of our lives into conformity. So not one day only but all our days will be enriched and blessed.³

-
1. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXX.
 2. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXVII.
 3. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXIX.

Duties of magistrates and leaders of the Church.

It is the responsibility of leaders of the community in church and state to ensure that the principles of Sabbath observance are understood, that all men are given the possibility of keeping the Sabbath rightly and no man is allowed to hinder a true observance.¹

Pastors of churches should therefore give clear instruction to their people, expounding the truth of the Sabbath, emphasising the importance of keeping it. They must call Sabbath-breakers to account and discipline them.²

Magistrates too have their solemn responsibilities before God. For he who does not forbid sin when he can is encouraging sin. The words of the fourth commandment, "the stranger within thy gates" may well be taken as meaning the subjects of those in authority. Brown does not discuss, indeed will not be drawn into a discussion of liberty of conscience, or the power of the state in church affairs. His one concern is to emphasise that Christian magistrates must save the Sabbath Day from all profanation, and must visit with civil punishments all Sabbath-breakers.

In conclusion Brown emphasises the importance of Sabbath observance by speaking of the penalties that follow Sabbath profanation and the blessings that come to those who hallow the Day as God commanded.

-
1. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXXI.
 2. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXXII.

Sabbath breaking means the violation of the First Table of God's Law and brings the guilt of the basest sacrilege. It is ingratitude at its worst, it is the vilifying of the goodness and pity and love of God, it is sin against a man's own salvation. It brings judgement both natural and spiritual. How greatly God abhors this sin.¹

On the other hand what blessings flow from a right observance of the Sabbath Day. God is glorified and the faith of Christ is spread abroad. Private worship, family worship, public worship are all enriched and blessed. Indeed the whole of life for the individual, for the family, for the community and state is strengthened and hallowed. God knows those who keep His day and on them He sets His most abundant blessings.²

1. Vol. II. Bk. VI. Ch. XXXIII.
2. Vol. VI. Bk. VI. Ch. XXXIV.

PART III

The Man and the Writer.

"He was a notable writer.
In controversy he was acute,
masculine and strong ... His works
evidence his solid piety and real
acquaintance with God and godliness."

Howie of Lochgoin.

Chapter I - Controversialist and Devotional Writer.

The manner of man that John Brown was must be determined almost entirely from his writings. We have certainly Samuel Rutherford's opinion of him in his youth - "I thought I saw Christ in him more than in his brethren;"¹ the cause for which he suffered banishment makes evident a courage touched no doubt with asperity: his whole life and work in the years that followed are tokens of his life-long devotion to the cause of Covenanted Presbytery. But these few things apart, we must depend for our knowledge of the man upon his writings.

There is a double impression borne in upon the reader as he makes his way through Brown's books and pamphlets, a double impression that is most striking. It brings to mind the contrast Taylor Innes draws so vividly between the two sides of Rutherford's character.

"It looks sometimes as if there were two men in him. One was the man whom we know in his letters - ardent, aspiring and unworldly, impatient of earth, intolerant of sins, rapt into the continual contemplation of one unseen face, finding his history in its changing aspect, and his happiness in its returning smile. The other man was the intellectual gladiator, the rejoicing and remorseless logician, the divider of words, the distinguisher of thoughts, the hater of doubt and ambiguity, the scorner of compromise and concession, the incessant and determined disputant, the passionate admirer of sequence and system and order, in small things as in great - in the corner of the corner of an argument as in the mighty world outside with its orbits of the Church and of the State."²

The passage is quoted in full because, while Brown did not

-
1. Letters of Samuel Rutherford. No. CXXXI.
 2. Studies in Scottish History - A. Taylor Innes. p.15.

rise to the heights of devotional splendour nor sink to the depths of controversial bitterness of which Rutherford was capable, the words might be used almost verbatim of the later writer. He is at once a controversialist with many faults of his trade, and a devotional writer of moving power. Certain of his books, it is difficult to realise as written by the same man. Sometimes in the same book the two strangely conjoined sides of his personality are revealed.

I.

As a controversialist Brown has certain admirable qualities. He is a writer of immense industry. When he takes up consideration of a matter, not only is every aspect of it raised and examined thoroughly, but every cognate subject that might have bearing upon it is considered in detail by his acute mind.

His learning is extensive. Like many of his contemporaries he has an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures. No doctrine is ever debated without massive substantiation from the textbook of the Faith. With Old Testament and New Testament he seems equally familiar. But his acquaintance with other sources is just as impressive. From many of the classical writers he quotes freely, Augustine and other Church Fathers he calls often to his aid, he has a close acquaintance with the work of his fellow-Calvinists, at home and abroad, particularly in the Netherlands, his apologetic work shows that he has read much of the writings of his opponents. Hewison calls him with reason "this gifted

scholar," this accomplished Calvinist."¹

His acuteness in argument is to be observed on every page of his controversial writings. His training in scholasticism at the Town's College of Edinburgh stood him in good stead. With acute mind he analyses the positions of his adversaries, attacking fiercely the weak points in their arguments, marshalling his own points with impeccable logic and a masterly grasp of the finest detail.

Of his courage his work speaks as eloquently as his life. Without fear or favour he takes his stand by the truth as he knows it. Neither the strength of theological opposition, nor the long reach of the persecutor of his brethren, will make this undaunted soul waver in his defence of the truth or abate his opposition to heresy in doctrine or tyranny in Church and State.

But if he possessed these virtues as controversialist he has many failings. His thoroughness means much repetition and endless prolixity. If he is exhaustive, he can be also exhausting. His acuteness of argument becomes often the most tiring scholasticism, his use of the syllogism a device that wearies the mind without commending the truth.

His courage and resolution in debate - and now we approach the central weakness of Brown as a controversialist - degenerates far too often into bitterness and vindictiveness and intolerance.

1. J.K. Hewison. "The Covenanters" Vol. II. p.161.

Take for instance these phrases from the Introduction to his "Quakerism, the Pathway to Paganism." He speaks of "this impudent pestilentious cloud of heathenish and hellish darkness ... the very impure spawn of perfect anti-christian enmity to our Lord Jesus ... that hell-hatched design, breathing forth nothing but putrid poison, that innate serpentine union of manifest and mad opposition to all the mysteries of God."¹ There is typified the manner in which Brown too often deals with his adversaries, a manner not limited only to those who differ from him in the fundamental doctrines of the faith. Let a man differ from him in any point of what he considers orthodoxy, and Brown will be most unwilling to see in him any good whatsoever. He will fasten fiercely on the smallest point at issue, he will seek to convict him of every heretical view he can drag into the debate, he will call him on the slightest provocation and sometimes without it, by every theological bad word he can introduce. Brown never seeks to appreciate an opponent's position from the inside, and so his debates have a lack of that charitableness which is not a weakness of the controversialist but his truest strength.

We may find some apology for Brown's bitterness as a controversialist by blaming the spirit of the age. It was not a tolerant age. A study of the apologetics and pamphlets of the period displays a fierceness of language and a bitterness of invective which we would feel now out of place in any debate and shamefully incongruous in any religious discussion. It was not a tolerant age.

1. Quakerism. Epistle to the Reader. p.2.

But it is the fierceness of the struggles in which he was engaged that must be Brown's chief defence, as controversialist.

It is not easy to be tolerant and patient and charitable when one has been deprived of one's chosen life-work and banished from one's homeland by a cruel and tyrannical government. It is not easy to discuss in quiet academic tones questions which mean more to a man than life or death. And the issues with which Brown dealt were to him of infinite importance. Heresy in even a small matter was a breach in the rampart of truth which might let in a very flood of the enemies of God. Any attack on the essential freedom of the Church was an attempt to tear asunder the seamless robe of Christ the Redeemer. Such opposition was to be met not with polite academic discussion, but with the most uncompromising defence a man could muster, with courage that counted no cost, no sacrifice too great. If Brown and others who stood with him in the forefront of the Covenanting struggle had been milder men, more willing to accept compromise, more tolerant of their opponents' point of view, they might have stood higher in the modern appreciation as controversialists, but they certainly would not have handed on to us the heritage of freedom in Church and State which we enjoy. Says Bishop Knox, "However fierce and intolerant - unchristlike, if you will - was the form of their resistance, they were absolutely right in resisting, and to that resistance, even unto death, we owe our present liberties."¹

1. Bishop A.E. Knox. "Robert Leighton." p.260.

It must be remembered too that Brown died, like so many in these years of persecution, seeing no hope of immediate victory for his cause. Certainly God would vindicate His people. He believed that with all the passion of his devoted soul, but only as He willed and in His own time. Brown passed his closing years in a period when the temptation to compromise was splitting his party into bitter sections and weakening the cause. He died when news of Bothwell Bridge and the fierce repression that followed was still being brought to the Netherlands. It is not easy to be patient and tolerant when one dies an apparent failure with one's cause in ruins. "All these Scotsmen" writes Taylor Innes, "received not the promise ... But they planted the strong roots of our liberties ... Those who come after us to the latest age will gather the fruits not of the prayers only, but of the efforts of men who ... passed away with unsatisfied eyes from their broken work, the hot heart stilled after the storms of life, and the seal of death upon the faithful brow."¹

II.

From Brown the controversialist we turn to Brown the devotional writer. As we have seen, the circumstances of his time go far to explain the faults of his controversial style. Hewison indeed laments that a man of such learning and ability, had to turn at all to the arid sphere of controversy. No doubt we are coming nearer to the man as he was in himself when we take up the devotional works, or read the devotional passages that are scattered throughout all his writings, sometimes in the most unex-

1. A. Taylor Innes, "Studies in Scottish History. p.53.

pected places.

How different is this John Brown from the controversialist. Here is the devoted Christian, the father in God, the man of prayer. Devotion to Christ is the heart of his own faith. For Him he has willingly accepted exile from his beloved Annandale parish, for Him he is ready to bear all that man can do, and count all things as loss. Doctrine there must be and orthodoxy is vital, but deeper than all it is a man's relationship to Jesus Christ which brings him peace with God and assurance of Heaven. His service brings satisfying joy, however fiercely the persecutors may rage; communion with Him is the highest bliss the spirits of men can know. His sufferings for the faith have not sundered him from Christ but drawn him closer, have taught him deep truths prosperity could never have revealed, have made him dwell more and more on that eternal world where with the Saviour he will receive an endless reward.

As he himself learns more of Christ, his heart yearns for his brethren and their growth in grace. The works that have come down to us reveal the kind of sermon that Brown preached in the Scots Kirk, the manner of conversation he had with those who gathered round him in the home of John Russell, elder in that congregation. Always there is the desire that those who listened to him should make fuller surrender of themselves to Christ, that they should give themselves to prayer, that they should count no cost too great for the joy of serving the Lord. "Christ is the

Way and the Truth and the Life:" in the book which bears this title and in all his devotional writings he yearns that his fellow-Christians should walk that Way, and learn that Truth and live that Life.

He is essentially a man of prayer. We have McWard's testimony for this,¹ but it is made manifest in his own writings. Communion with God had been deepened through many years of discipline and devotion. His book on prayer is written plainly by one who learned the matter of it not at his desk but on his knees.

He is a man who lives sub specie aeternitatis. He has learned the littleness of the temporal world, and the greatness of eternity. What should he care for man, who lives under the eye of God? Over against the torments of an eternity without God, what value is there in the pomp of the oppressor, or the enjoyment of the libertine, or the worldly security of the ungodly? In the light of the eternity of bliss that awaits the Christian, what should he reck of the sufferings that are but for a moment?

This is the man whom the sermons reveal, the spiritual guide who was a central figure of the group that met in Russell's home, the steadfast soul whose friendship meant so much to McWard and Wallace, to Richard Cameron, and many another exile of the Covenant.

In a later age we have perhaps learned to avoid Brown's more obvious failings; God give us grace to maintain his courage and his faith, his love for the truth, his devotion to Christ the King.

1. Wodrow M.S.S. Folio. 58. No. 103.

Chapter 2 - Some Illustrative Extracts from the Devotional Writings.

... How doth the least glimpse through the smallest cranny of this glorious and glorifying knowledge of God in Christ, apprehended by faith raise up the soul to that pitch of joy and satisfaction which the knowledge of natural things in its purest perfection shall never be able to cause. O must not this be the very suburbs of heaven to the soul. (Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life. p.5)

... We wonder that 'tis not always hot summer days, a flourishing and fruitful season, with souls and with churches. But know we the thoughts of the Lord? Know we the usefulness, yea necessity of long winter nights, stormy blasts, rain, hail, snow and frost? Consider we that our state and condition, while here, calleth for these vicissitudes and requireth the blowing of the north as well as of the south winds? (ib. p.13)

... Our strength must be in Christ: to the rock of ages must we fly, to our chambers in Him must we retire, and there must we hide ourselves. On Christ's lee-side can we only ride safe and be free of the hazard of the storm. (ib. p.24)

... The best way then to keep the faith of Christ ... is to be exercising the faith of Christ. Live up then to the Gospel, and so be sure of it, and be safe in it. (ib. p.25)

... The knowledge of Christ is all. Know Him, and we know Heaven and the way to it... Let then a man have never so much

knowledge, and be acquainted with the mysteries of all arts and sciences, and with the depths of nature and intrigues of states, and all the theory of religion. If he be unacquainted with Jesus, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know. (ib. p.52)

... Covenanting with Christ is a grave business, and requireth deliberation, posedness of soul, rational resolution, full purpose of heart, and satisfaction of soul. The soul must close with Him for all things, adhere to Him upon all hazards, take Him and the sharpest cross that followeth Him. (ib. p.78).

... It is one thing to have grace and another thing to see that we have grace. Many may question their growth in grace when their very questioning of it may evince the contrary. (ib. p.109).

... Victory and a full conquest over the flesh is not promised to any believer at his first appearing in the fields to fight; nor granted to all in any measure at their first putting on their armour. (ib. p.134)

... Let him (the believer) not measure his growth in knowledge, by his growth in the faculty of speaking and discoursing of such or such points of religion; many measure their knowledge by their tongue and think they know little, because they can express little. It is safer to measure their knowledge by the impression that the truth hath on their spirits, and the effect of it on all their carriage. (ib. p.212).

... It were good in such a time of erring from the way of truth, to be gripping Christ faster, and cleaving to Him by faith, and living by faith in Him. This is to hold the foundation fast; and then let the tempest of error blow as it will, they will ride at a sure anchor and be safe because fixed upon the Rock of Ages: and further, living near Christ in such a dangerous day, would be a noble preservative from the infection of error. The soul that is dwelling in Christ dwelleth in light, and will discover error sooner than another, because living under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness which discovereth error. (ib. p.233).

... Fix your affections on, and seek those things that are above... Is there such a glorious inheritance for you above and are your hearts and affections still below? O how unbeseeming is it to such who have this hope and expectation of a crown to be still gadding in their affections after straw: (Christ in Believers, the Hope of Glory. p.22)

... We may apprehend Christ to be in the believer in these respects: as a king in his kingdom sitting upon his throne ruling and defending it; as the master of a family in his own house where he dwells with contentment; as a tradesman in his shop, doing the work of his calling: as one in his obtained possession and in his garden, delighting himself in the enjoyment of what he hath gotten and purchased. (ib. p.67. 1-5).

... What want they who have Heaven? And can they want Heaven when they have Christ within them? (ib. p.75)

... Where Christ is, there is immediately an emptiness seen in all other things, and such fulness discovered and discovered in Him, as satisfies and quiets the soul. (ib. p.118).

... We in the preaching and ye in the hearing of the Gospel, must continually look upon it as a mystery, and therefore should beware of judging ourselves in a capacity to reach unto the ground of this so great a deep ... and so to cast at all we cannot fathom, or attempt to cast it in our calms and forms. O indeed a heavy sin, a bold, daring and presumptuous counterfeiting of the king's coin, and a giving out of our counterfeit mixed chipped metal. (ib. p.150).

... This is that peace of God which passeth all understanding and which keepeth as a garrison the heart and mind. What will a strong, well-manned and well-provided garrison care for the loud noise of a few naked soldiers? All the forces in the world cannot make a breach in nor climb over the walls of this garrison. They cannot cause a mutiny there, their grenades cannot trouble them. In the midst of all the confusions and noises about them, they may be quiet, settled and stayed like Mount Zion. (Life of Faith p.68)

... They may cast a man in prison, that neither wife nor any of his relations shall have access to him to be refreshing and comfortable to him. But neither lock nor key, nor strong walls nor doors can keep out his God from him. (ib. p.69).

... There are many great and precious promises set down in the Word of God ... Here is a richly covered table with all varieties for faith to feed upon. The promises are the kindly food of faith. By them and through them it sucketh in from the fountain of all fulness all that the poor soul standeth in need of. (ib. p.186)

... Faith's first task is the association of the soul with Christ, its next and after work is the assimilation of the soul to Him. (Swansong. Epistle to Reader).

... Shall I rebel against His dispensations? Nay rather, because His Word is true, I will embrace the sharpest of dispensations He is pleased to try me with, and wait to see how infinite wisdom shall make good what truth itself hath said. (ib. p.20).

... Christ hath gone through sorrow, shame, pain ... yea death itself and thereby hath paved a way for His followers and hath strawed it with flowers of fragrant love. (ib. p.74).

... We must look upon the Church of Christ as an hospital wherein every person has some defect or other ... This is God's holy appointment that He may show His love and care in going through His hospital, daily giving physick, here binding up the broken leg or arm, there bearing His sickly children in His arms, turning the other sick one's bed unto him, washing away the blood and filth of another and curing all so that none dieth in His hand. He carrieth all safe to glory. (A Mirror. p. 203).

... However bitter it (chastening) may be in itself and poisonous like, God can make it medicinal. (Romans. p.307).

... Faith is a flower that groweth not in the garden of either Jew or Gentile by nature. (ib. p.467).

... True Christian love is a notable reason to keep Christians to the conscientious discharge of all their duties towards their neighbours: like oil it maketh all the rest of the wheels to go. (ib. p.492).

... The life of a Christian is nothing but a continual motion, there is no standing still for him here. (ib. p.514).

... What a wonder is this. Will the Lord be content to hear all our heart-secrets and admit us to intimate familiarity to talk with Him as one heart friend with another ... and shall this be our burden? (Prayer p.28).

... The mouth in prayer must express the desires of the soul, the inward communings, motions and meditations of the heart, otherwise prayer is no prayer, but a parcel of empty insignificant words and sounds. (ib. p.29).

... What a comely, pleasant and desirable sight is it to a spiritual soul to see a family assembling together and daily devoting themselves to God ... Families have hereby their communion kept with God, and thus are kept in the suburbs of Heaven. (Prayer p.95).

... The soul shall then be perfect and without sin for it shall be like God. O wonderful! O inconceivable glory and purity! We shall be like Him, in all moral virtues, and in what we are commanded to imitate Him in ... The attributes of God shall become manifestly legible on the soul as being imprinted upon it, as the wax doth answer the seal and correspond therewith.

(Enoch's Testimony. p.157).

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

A - Brown's own works.

(Dates of editions are given as they have been used)

1. The Apologeticall Relation. 1665.
2. Apology for or Vindication of the Oppressed Persecuted Ministers. 1677
3. Treatise on Prayer. Glasgow, 1822.
4. History of the Indulgence. 1678.
5. Mirror, or Looking-Glass for Saint and Sinner. Glasgow, 1793.
6. Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life. Edinburgh. 1839.
7. The Banders Disbanded. Dalry. 1805.
8. An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans. Edinburgh. 1766.
9. The Life of Faith in Times of Trouble. Edinburgh. 1716.
10. The Swan-Song or the Second Part of the Life of Faith. Edinburgh. 171
11. Libri Duo. Amsterdam. 1670.
12. The Life of Justification opened. 1695.
13. Quakerism, the Pathway to Paganism. Edinburgh. 1678.
14. De Causa Dei Contra Anti-Sabbatarios. Rotterdam, 1674.
15. Christ in Believers the Hope of Glory. London, 1837.
16. Enoch's Testimony opened up. Edinburgh, 1771.
17. Apologia pro Ecclesia Scoticana. M.S.S. in University Library,
Edinburgh.
18. Letters and Papers. Wodrow M.S.S. National Library of Scotland.

B - Works Consulted.

1. History of His Own Time. Bishop Burnet. 4 Vols. London, 1753.
2. Memoirs of Veitch and Bryson, edited by McCrie. Edinburgh, 1728.
3. Historical Notices of Scottish Affairs. (1661-88) 2 Vols. Bannatyre Club. Edinburgh, 1848.
4. Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland from the Restoration of Charles II (1660-71) Sir George McKenzie. Edinburgh, 1818.
5. Naphtali or the Wrestlings of the Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1667.
6. Faithful Contendings Displayed. A. Shields. Edinburgh, 1703.
7. Memoirs of His Own Time (1632-70) Sir James Turner. Edinburgh 1829.
8. Lauderdale Papers. (1639-79) edited by O. Airy. 3 Vols. Camden Society. London, 1884-5.
9. The Sufferings of the Church of Scotland. R. Wodrow (4 Vols.) Glasgow and Edinburgh. 1829.
10. Letters of Samuel Rutherford. edited Bonar. Edinburgh and London, 1891.
11. The Scots Worthies. John Howie, revised Carslaw. Edinburgh. 1870.
12. Men of the Covenant. A. Smellie. (3rd Edition) London, 1904.
13. The Covenanters. J. King Hewison. 2 Vols. Glasgow. 1908.
14. Robert Leighton. E.A. Knox. London, 1930.
15. Montrose. John Buchan. London, 1928.
16. Six Saints of the Covenant. Hay Fleming. London, 1901.
17. Life of Rev. John Brown of Wamphray. T. Lockerby. Edinburgh, 1839.
18. Richard Cameron, Prof. Herkless. Edinburgh, 1896.
19. Select Biographies. R. Wodrow, edited W.K. Tweedie. Wodrow Society, 2 Vols. Edinburgh, 1845-7.
20. Viscount Dundee. Louis A. Barbe. Edinburgh and London, 1904.

21. Scottish Theology and Theologians. James Walker. Edinburgh. 1872.
22. Treasury of the Scottish Covenants. J.C. Johnston. Edinburgh 1887.
23. The Covenanters under Persecution. H. McPherson. Edinburgh 1923.
24. Fifty Years' Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters. Dodds. 1860.
25. The History of the Scottish Church, Rotterdam. W. Steven. Edinburgh, 1832.
26. The Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland. J. Kirkton edited C.K. Sharpe. Edinburgh. 1817.
27. The Story of the Scottish Church. Thos. McCrie. London, 1875.
28. Church History of Scotland. J. Cunningham. 2 Vols. 2nd Edition. 1882
29. Studies in Scottish History. A. Taylor Innes. London, 1892.
30. Wamphray. John Paterson. Lockertie. 1906.
31. The Scot Abroad. J. Hill Burton. Edinburgh & London. 1883.
32. History of Scotland. J. Hill Burton. 8 Vols. Edinburgh & London. 1874.
33. History of Scotland. P. Hume Brown. 4 Vols. Cambridge. 1902.
34. Passing of the Stewarts. A.M. McKenzie. London, 1937.
35. Making of Scotland. R.S. Rait. London, 1929.
36. History of Scotland. Andrew Lang. (4 Vols) Edinburgh & London. 1900-6.
37. Statistical Account of Scotland. Vol. XII. 1794.
38. New Statistical Account. Vol. IV.
39. Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae (New Edition) H. Scott.
40. Acts of Parliament of Scotland. edited Thos. Thomson. Vols. VII and VIII.
41. Register of the Privy Council of Scotland. Register House, Edinburgh